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VOL 4
SANAMI MATOH
NOTES: PG 54 (028.PNG)
DEE SAYS "UH HUH."
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-FAKE-™

4

SANAMI MATOH

Manga
Drama
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A mod bomber is on the loose ond Dee ond Ryo ore on the cose. However, before they con cotch their mon, the bomber strikes ot the 27th precinct. Personol feelings oside, the poir must work even horder to copture the culprit before things get reolly out of hond. After the bombing incident, Bikky ond Corol go through o crisis of their own but it hos nothing to do with the precinct ond everything to do with eoch other.

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OT
OLDER TEEN

-FAKE-

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FAKE VOLUME 4

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-FAKE-

THE STORY SO FAR...

Meet Ryo and Dee, two New York City cops with an attraction for action—and each other! When soft-spoken Detective Randy "Ryo" Macleen is transferred to the NYPD's 27th precinct, he's soon partnered up with Dee Leytner--a cocky, confident cop with attitude to spare. Dee has strong feelings for Ryo and is not reluctant to share them, but Ryo's feelings have been a mystery...to both Dee and himself.

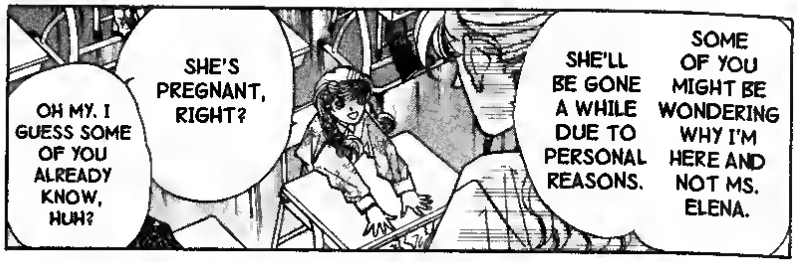
The detectives' first case together involved a drug-related homicide. The victim was a narcotics smuggler, survived only by his young son Bikky. Though a smart-mouthed street punk and a petty criminal-in-the-making, Bikky helped Dee and Ryo foil the drug-smuggling ring that killed his father. Seeing that the tough-talking boy was actually a frightened, sad child with nowhere to go, kind-hearted Ryo took Bikky in...much to Dee's chagrin.

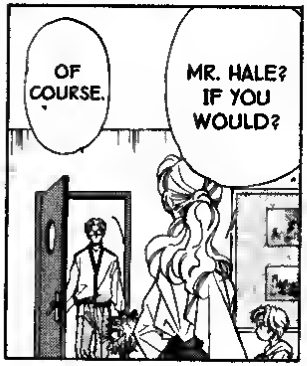
In their second case, the detectives came to the rescue of a young pickpocket named Carol. Carol was stealing wallets to try to get enough money to bail her sick father out of jail before he died, but she ended up picking the pocket of a murderer whose wallet contained a key piece of evidence. In order to protect Carol from the killer and his cohorts, Ryo let her stay with him temporarily.

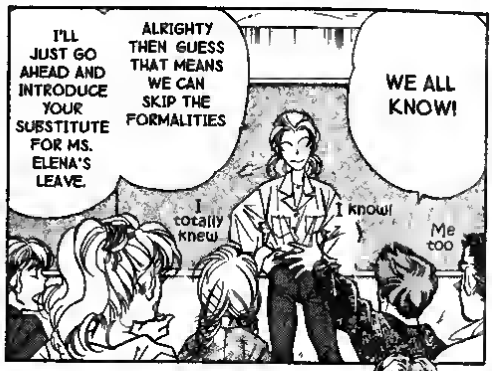
Even while Dee and Ryo's partnership grew into a bond of friendship, Bikky and Carol became close friends as well, despite the three years between them. While on a camping trip, Carol told Bikky that she was not going to date anyone until she reached the age of eighteen...though she was accepting reservations. After saving Carol from a bear, Bikky worked up enough courage to ask that he be made first on Carol's list, and Carol promised herself to the young man.

Back at the precinct, a detective by the name of Jemmy "J.J." Adams arrived with a powerful, unrequited crush on Dee left over from their days at the Police Academy. To make matters even more complicated, Ryo and Dee have also acquired a new supervisor, Chief Berkeley Rose...who has a crush on Ryo!

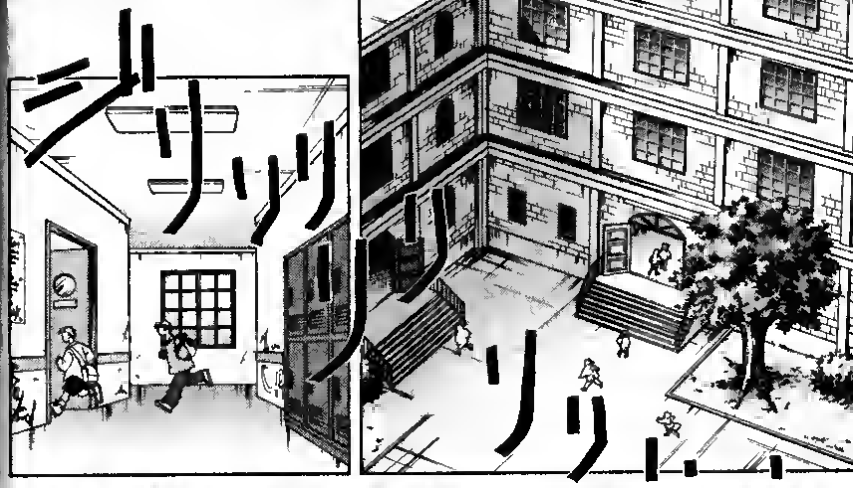
FAKE
act.11
NEW STORY START.
The Times
THANK YOU.


OH MY. I GUESS SOME OF YOU ALREADY KNOW, HUH?
SHE'S PREGNANT, RIGHT?
SHE'LL BE GONE A WHILE DUE TO PERSONAL REASONS.
SOME OF YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING WHY I'M HERE AND NOT MS. ELENA.


OF COURSE.
MR. HALE? IF YOU WOULD?


I'LL JUST GO AHEAD AND INTRODUCE YOUR SUBSTITUTE FOR MS. ELENA'S LEAVE.
ALRIGHTY THEN GUESS THAT MEANS WE CAN SKIP THE FORMALITIES
WE ALL KNOW!
I totally knew
I know!
Me too

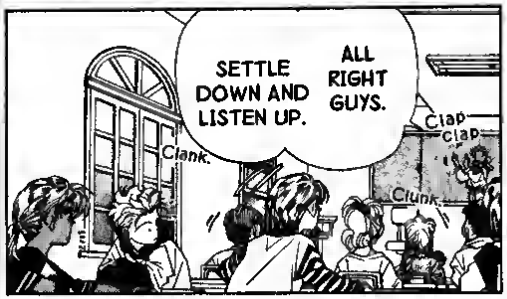
HI THERE, EVERYONE. MY NAME'S JOHN HALE. I'LL BE TAKING OVER HERE FOR MS. ELENA WHILE SHE'S ON LEAVE.
IT'S VERY NICE TO MEET ALL OF YOU.


RING RING

HEY, BIKKY.

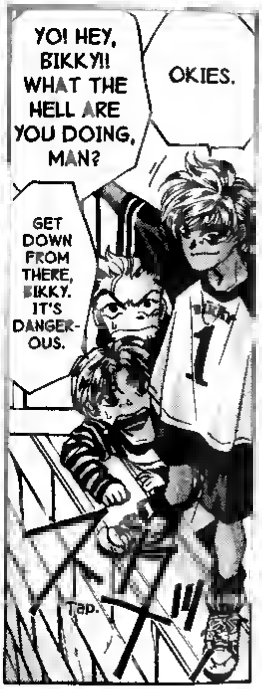
IDIOT. THAT'S BECAUSE SHE WAS ALWAYS FAR AWAY.
Ke
weep
GUESS I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN SHE WAS BUSY GOING AFTER IT JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE. AAAHHH. MY ULTIMATE, FAVE TEACH... BUT SHE SEEMS SO FAR AWAY NOW. DAMN THOSE ADULTS. THEY'RE ALL SO AMAZINGLY DIRTY.

I DON'T HAVE TO GUESS, I ALREADY HEARD. MS ELENA'S TAKING MATERNITY LEAVE, RIGHT?
GUESS WHAT?
Turn

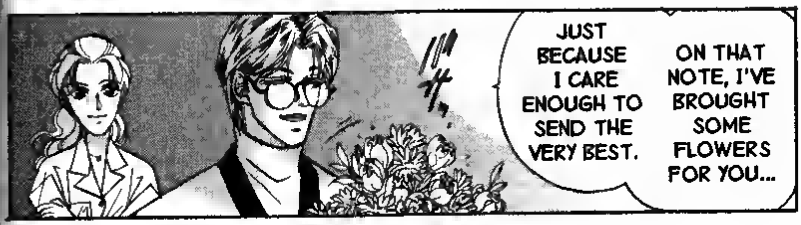

ALL RIGHT GUYS.
SETTLE DOWN AND LISTEN UP.
Clap clap
Clank.
Clunk.

ALL OF YOU!! BACK IN YOUR SEATS RIGHT NOW AND SIT STILL, PLEASE!!
HOLY CRAP, YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S COMING FROM THE GYM SHEDS.
LOOK OUTSIDE, DUDE. I THINK I SEE SMOKE.
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING BLEW UP.
WHAT WAS THAT?

GERONIMO!


YO! HEY, BIKKY!! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, MAN?
OKIES.
GET DOWN FROM THERE, BIKKY. IT'S DANGEROUS.
Tap.

HE JUMPED!!
There's no Geronimo in suicide!!


JUST BECAUSE I CARE ENOUGH TO SEND THE VERY BEST.
ON THAT NOTE, I'VE BROUGHT SOME FLOWERS FOR YOU...

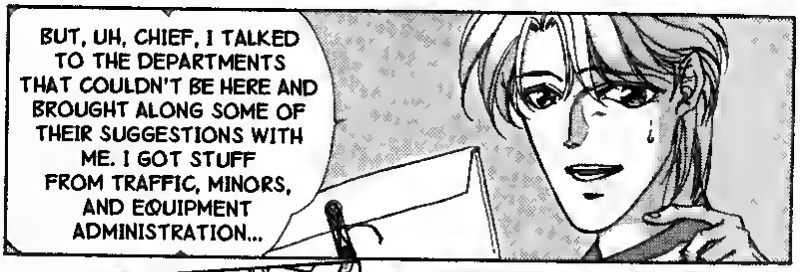
...TO YOU.

THESE ARE MY GIFT...
KK

!!
KA BOOM

WELL, THE ONLY FACES I SEE HERE ARE FROM CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS.
And they're mainly the ones I can't stand to boot.
YEAH, NO FAIR, COMMISSIONER.
YOU CAN'T JUST ASSEMBLE US AND THEN RUN OUT!!
-Participant List-
Dee, Ryo, JJ, Ted, Drake
But...

WAIT A GOD-DAMN MINUTE THERE!!
--HOW'S ABOUT WE CALL IT A DAY? EVERYONE'S DISMISSED. SEE YA.

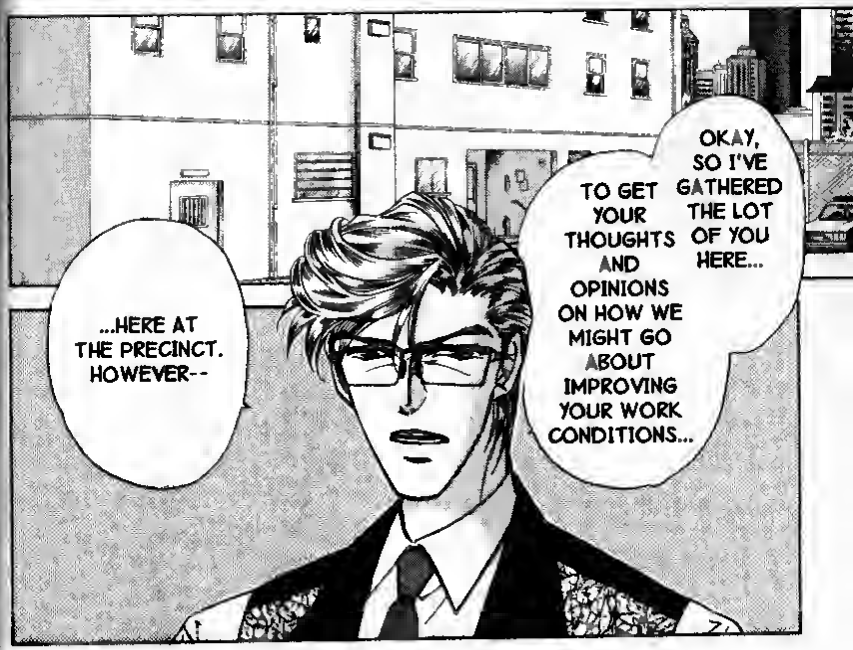

BUT, UH, CHIEF, I TALKED TO THE DEPARTMENTS THAT COULDN'T BE HERE AND BROUGHT ALONG SOME OF THEIR SUGGESTIONS WITH ME. I GOT STUFF FROM TRAFFIC, MINORS, AND EQUIPMENT ADMINISTRATION...

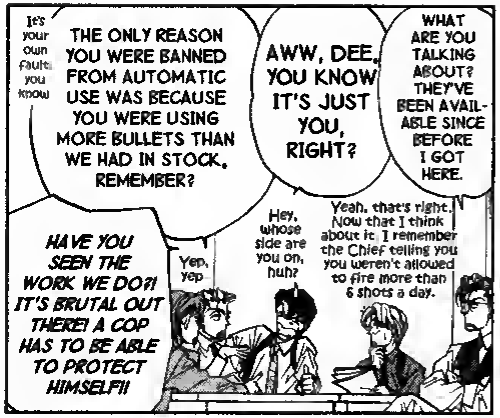
?!

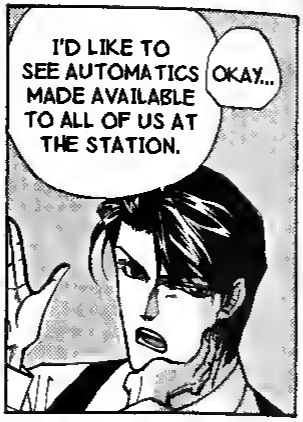
I, UM, ER, I, BUT...
HMMM, I SEE. WELL, I GUESS THE ONLY PERSON I NEED TO TALK TO IS YOU, RIGHT? SO WHY DON'T YOU AND I HAVE A NICE PENETRATING MAN-TO-MAN CONVERSATION ABOUT IT IN MY OFFICE?
GRR!
twitch

THAT DUDE CAN'T BE HUMAN..

Woohoo! A bomb! A bomb!! I'm gonna be the first one on the scene!! My lucky day!!
HOLY SHIT!


...HERE AT THE PRECINCT. HOWEVER--
TO GET YOUR THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ON HOW WE MIGHT GO ABOUT IMPROVING YOUR WORK CONDITIONS...
OKAY, SO I'VE GATHERED THE LOT OF YOU HERE...

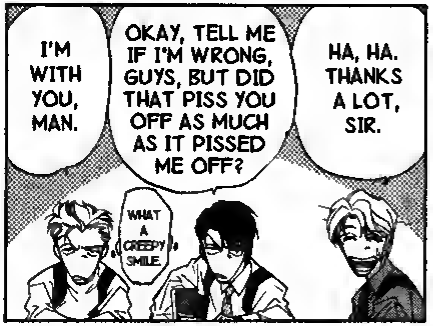

It's your own fault, you know
THE ONLY REASON YOU WERE BANNED FROM AUTOMATIC USE WAS BECAUSE YOU WERE USING MORE BULLETS THAN WE HAD IN STOCK, REMEMBER?
AWW, DEE, YOU KNOW IT'S JUST YOU, RIGHT?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THEY'VE BEEN AVAILABLE SINCE BEFORE I GOT HERE.
HAVE YOU SEEN THE WORK WE DO?! IT'S BRUTAL OUT THERE! A COP HAS TO BE ABLE TO PROTECT HIMSELF!!
Yep, yep
Hey, whose side are you on, huh?
Yeah, that's right. Now that I think about it, I remember the Chief telling you you weren't allowed to fire more than 6 shots a day.


I'D LIKE TO SEE AUTOMATICS MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL OF US AT THE STATION.
OKAY...

—what the hell, you!
WHAT?!
No fair!!
But, but—
Fool.
THEN I SUGGEST YOU LEARN TO LOVE YOUR REVOLVER UNTIL YOU LEARN SOME SELF-CONTROL.

WELL, IF YOU THINK SO, THEN I'LL ALLOW IT.
smile

WE'RE IN A HIGH-CRIME AREA, AFTER ALL. IT CAN GET REALLY BAD OUT THERE.
ACTUALLY, COMMISSIONER ROSE, I THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO ALLOW HIM TO AT LEAST CARRY ONE AUTOMATIC OUT OF THE TWO WE'RE ALLOTTED.
Woo! I love ya, partner!!


I'M WITH YOU, MAN.
OKAY, TELL ME IF I'M WRONG, GUYS, BUT DID THAT PISS YOU OFF AS MUCH AS IT PISSED ME OFF?
HA, HA. THANKS A LOT, SIR.
WHAT A CREEPY SMILE.

glare
PERSONALLY, I'D MUCH RATHER DISCUSS WORK CONDITIONS HERE, COMMISSIONER.

YOU KNOW I'M REALLY NOT A BIG FAN... OF YOUR SORRY-ASS ATTITUDE.
sneer

YOU GET ENOUGH TO SURVIVE ON. DEAL WITH IT. NEXT.
OUR WAGES SUCK. I'D LIKE TO SEE US GET PAID MORE.

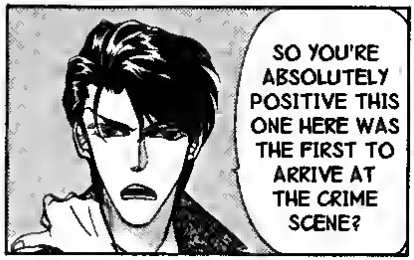
ALL RIGHT, THEN. I'LL GO FIRST.
SOMEONE SAY SOMETHING.
WHATEVER. WHAT IS IT YOU'D LIKE TO TELL ME? I'M SITTING DOWN.

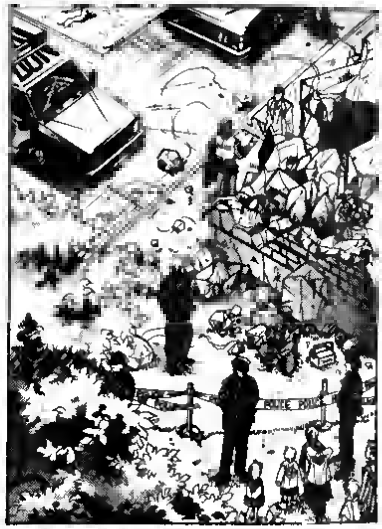
AS IF, YOU BRAIN-DEAD FOOL. NEXT.
I'D LIKE TO SEE SOME PORSCHES USED AT THE PRECINCT INSTEAD OF THESE CLUNKERS YOU ASSIGN TO US.

Numero uno!!
Okay. Who the hell do you think you are?

HMMM. I'LL CONSIDER THAT ONE.
I'D LIKE TO WORK WITH DEE, PLEASE.
HEY!!

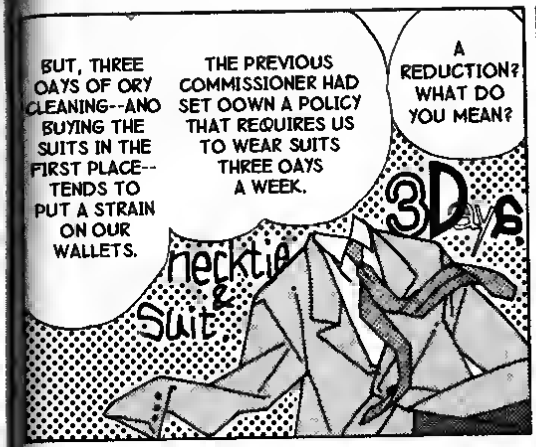
THERE'S BEEN AN EXPLOSION AT THE CENTER SCHOOL, SIR!

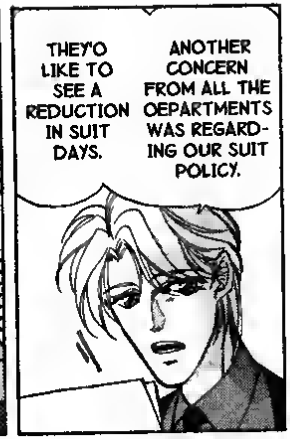

SO YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY POSITIVE THIS ONE HERE WAS THE FIRST TO ARRIVE AT THE CRIME SCENE?


POLICE LINE

WELL, URR, YES..

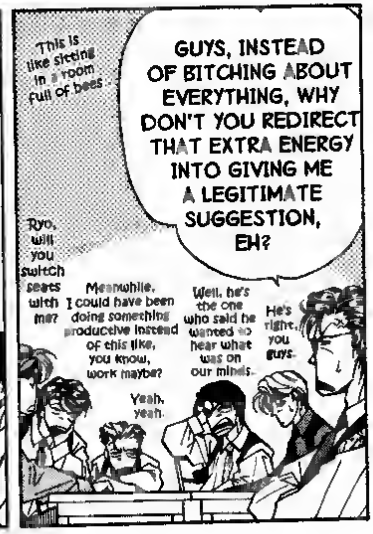
grin

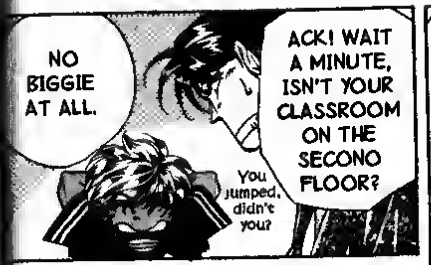

BUT, THREE DAYS OF DRY CLEANING--AND BUYING THE SUITS IN THE FIRST PLACE--TENDS TO PUT A STRAIN ON OUR WALLETS.
THE PREVIOUS COMMISSIONER HAD SET DOWN A POLICY THAT REQUIRES US TO WEAR SUITS THREE DAYS A WEEK.
A REDUCTION? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
3 Days
necktie & suit


THEY'D LIKE TO SEE A REDUCTION IN SUIT DAYS.
ANOTHER CONCERN FROM ALL THE DEPARTMENTS WAS REGARDING OUR SUIT POLICY.

Boo boo boo!!
How come absolutely none of our opinions count, huh?
And what's with playing favorites?
Are you talking about us? Time for you to come out of the closet with whatever you're talking about, dude.
HMMM... PERSONALLY, I THINK THE SUITS HELP TO HIDE THE LACK OF TALENTED INDIVIDUALS WE HAVE... BUT I SUPPOSE I CAN AMEND THAT POLICY.

WHAT IS IT?
COMMISSIONER!


This is like sitting in a room full of bees.
GUYS, INSTEAD OF BITCHING ABOUT EVERYTHING, WHY DON'T YOU REDIRECT THAT EXTRA ENERGY INTO GIVING ME A LEGITIMATE SUGGESTION, EH?
Ryo, will you switch seats with me?
Meanwhile, I could have been doing something productive instead of this like, you know, work maybe?
Yeah, yeah.
Well, he's the one who said he wanted to hear what was on our minds.
He's right, you guys.

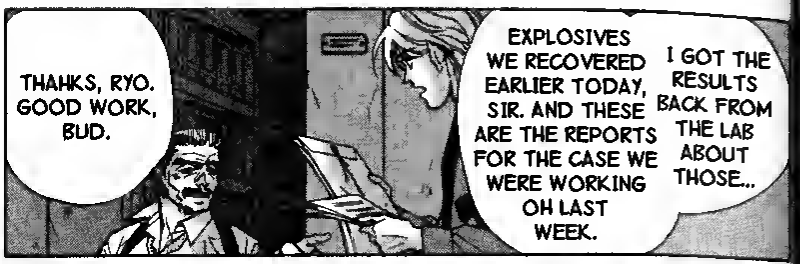


IT'S NOT THAT FAR IF YOU CUT RIGHT THROUGH THE FRONT.
HOW THE HELL OIO YOU GET HERE FIRST, HUH?! I THOUGHT YOUR CLASS WAS ALL THE WAY BACK THERE.

BUT I'LL ADMIT HE DID SURPRISE ME WITH THAT WHOLE JUMPING THING.
IT'S COOL. IT'S GOOD TO SEE HE'S GOT SO MUCH ENERGY, OON'T YOU THINK?
HA, HA.
I'M VERY SORRY, SIR, FOR ALL THE TROUBLE BIKKY'S CAUSED.

IF YOU ASK ME, YOU'VE GOT TOO MUCH ENERGY FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, TWERP.
SEE? I OON'T HAVE A.O.D.*-- JUST ENERGY!
Man, that hurt. He always has to use a friggin' fist to hit me, too.

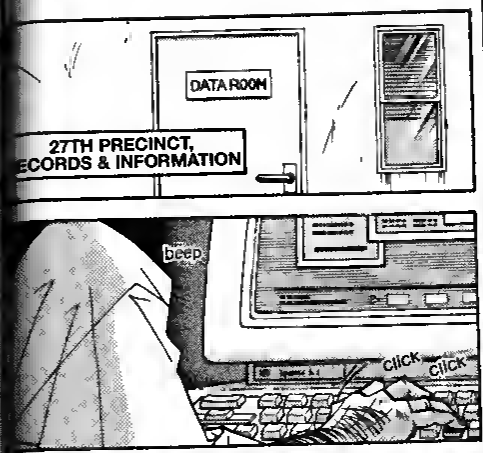
*A.O.D ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER

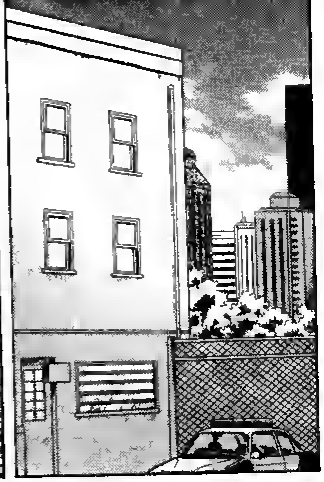

THANKS, RYO. GOOD WORK, BUD.
EXPLOSIVES WE RECOVERED EARLIER TODAY, SIR. AND THESE ARE THE REPORTS FOR THE CASE WE WERE WORKING ON LAST WEEK.
I GOT THE RESULTS BACK FROM THE LAB ABOUT THOSE...

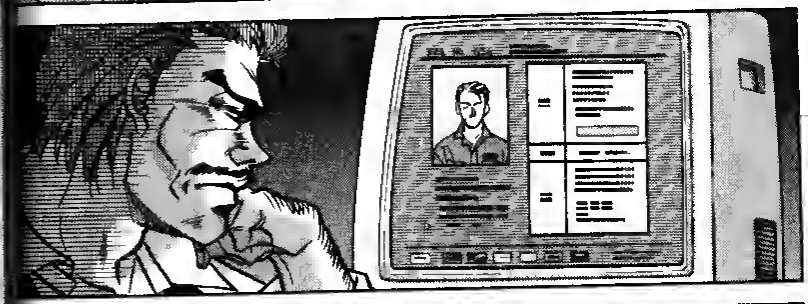
I SEE...

HMM? UHH, YES AND NO. IT WAS JUST A HUNCH IS ALL... AH UNREALISTIC HUNCH, AS IT TURNS OUT. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. IT'S OLD NEWS.
IF YOU DON'T MIND MY ASKING, SIR, IS THIS A SUSPECT YOU HAVE IN MIND?

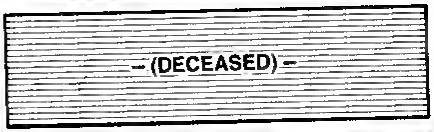
HE WAS LOOKING AT THE RECORDS FOR A BOMBER FROM WHEN?


DATA ROOM
27TH PRECINCT, RECORDS & INFORMATION
beep
click click





CHIEF?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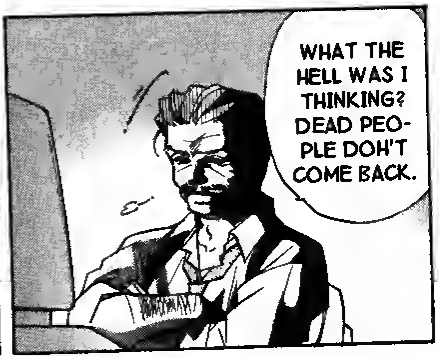

WHAT THE HELL WAS I THINKING? DEAD PEOPLE DON'T COME BACK.

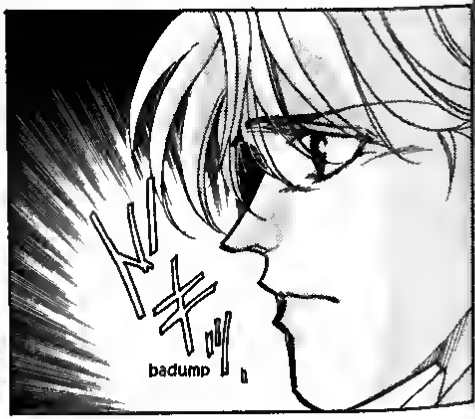
I GUESS. A BIT. I MEAN--
YOU SAY THAT LIKE IT'S A BAD THING. IS IT?

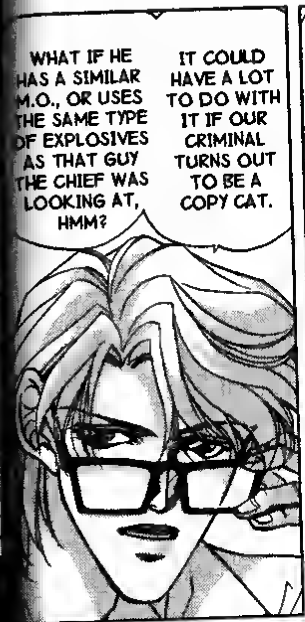
WHAT'S THE MATTER?

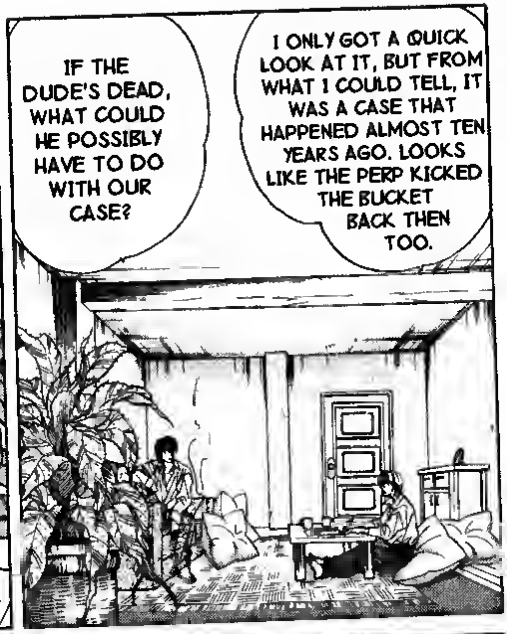
IT'S NOT A BIG THING BUT, I JUST, YOU'RE JUST SO..
EMPATHETIC, I GUESS IS HOW YOU'D SAY IT..
crush

YOU NEVER NOTICE A DAMN THING.
--WHEN IT COMES TO ANYONE ELSE, YOU'RE, LIKE, ALWAYS RIGHT ON THE MONEY. BUT WHEN IT COMES TO ME..

THAT'S NOT TRUE.


badump


WHAT IF HE HAS A SIMILAR M.O., OR USES THE SAME TYPE OF EXPLOSIVES AS THAT GUY THE CHIEF WAS LOOKING AT, HMM?
IT COULD HAVE A LOT TO DO WITH IT IF OUR CRIMINAL TURNS OUT TO BE A COPY CAT.


IF THE DUDE'S DEAD, WHAT COULD HE POSSIBLY HAVE TO DO WITH OUR CASE?
I ONLY GOT A QUICK LOOK AT IT, BUT FROM WHAT I COULD TELL, IT WAS A CASE THAT HAPPENED ALMOST TEN YEARS AGO. LOOKS LIKE THE PERP KICKED THE BUCKET BACK THEN TOO.

MODUS OPERANDI
I-I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT...
I CAN'T STOP WORRYING.
WELL, WE CAN'T RULE IT OUT AS A POSSIBILITY. BUT IF THE CHIEF SAYS NOT TO WORRY ABOUT IT, THEN WE SHOULDN'T... SHOULD WE?

ESPECIALLY SINCE IT HAPPENED AT BIKKY'S SCHOOL. I CAN'T HELP BUT STRESS, YOU KNOW?

I just wish I wish he'd just throw me even the slightest hint about how he felt about me.
Damn him to hell. What the hell does he think I am? A friggin' saint? I swear, sometimes I think he's just playing with me, baiting me and freaking me out.
I mean, I know he's a bit of an airhead but, man, even he must have figured this out.
RIGHT NOW, I'M ALL ABOUT LUSTING, Y'KNOW?
GEE, I WONDER WHAT GOT INTO HIM. BRINGING UP LUST ALL OF A SUDDEN.
WAIT! WAS HE TALKING ABOUT... ABOUT ME?!
oh my god!
WELL, YEAH, I KNOW ABOUT 'EM. BUT WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH THE CASE?
?
...KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE 7 DEADLY SINS? Especially the lust one?
LOOK. DO YOU...
I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THE CASE. I'M TALKING ABOUT ME, BECAUSE RIGHT NOW, I'M ALL ABOUT LUSTING, Y'KNOW?
DEE?!
siam
WELL... YOU ARE WHAT YOU ARE.
HUH? WHAT? WAIT...
DOOOmmMM
SHOT DOWN AGAIN. GUESS I'LL GO HOME AND SLEEP. SEE YA.

OKAY.
OH, THE LIGHT'S OUT? NO SWEAT. I'LL CHANGE THE BULB.
THE LIGHT DOESN'T COME ON IN THE BATHROOM.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, BIKKY?!
Aren't you supposed to be asleep?!
and I gotta pee.
Badump Badump Badump Badump.
Come on, Bikky. Try to walk straight.
Sooo sleepy...
I GUESS I'M NO GOOD AT LOOKING INTO THE KID'S EYES EITHER. THEY'RE JUST SO STRAIGHT-FORWARD.
MORNING.
Yawn
And I wasn't out all night like you think, thank you very much. Wish I was, but I wasn't.
SHUT UP. I'M ON THIRD SHIFT TONIGHT.
DUDE, IT'S LIKE, NOON, MAN. THOUGH IT IS KIND OF EARLY FOR YOU, HUH?

IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T NOTICE YOU... IT'S NOT LIKE THAT AT ALL.
.....
It's so hard to stare into his eyes. I feel like if I stare for too long, I'll get completely swallowed up. And as for—
NMM?!
NIIII!!
EEP!
YOU MAKE EVERYTHING SO HARD FOR ME, DEE. DOONNN!
lust
Sometimes, you're just too damn blunt.
lust

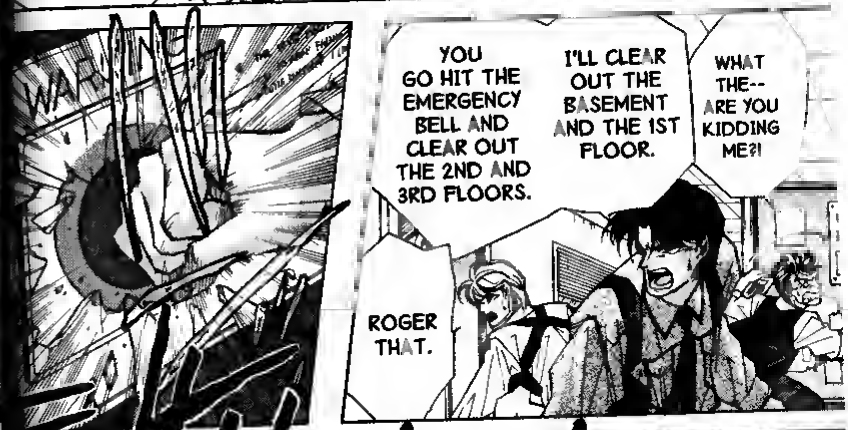
THEY SHOULD GO OFF IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES BY MY BEST GUESSTIMATE. OH, AND JUST IN CASE ANY OF YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT TRYING TO DEFUSE THEM,
THEY'RE RIGGED TO GO OFF IN 30 SECONDS IF ANYONE DECIDES TO START TAMPERING.
WHAT?!
WELL, I'VE TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF SETTING UP A FEW EXPLOSIVES IN YOUR BUILDING.
GOOD-BYE.
click
GOOD LUCK GETTING OUT.
BUT WHY?! WHY WOULD YOU--?!
AND I DON'T THINK HE'S KIDDING.
WHAT?!
ACCORDING TO OUR PSYCHOTIC ANONYMOUS SOURCE, THERE'S A BOMB SOMEWHERE INSIDE THIS BUILDING.
Heh.
EPHONE
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
DAMN IT.

TELL
ring ring
HEY, DEE..
I JUST GOT HERE MYSELF, ACTUALLY.
OH YEAH?
HMM? YOU'RE EARLY TOO, AREN'T YOU?
HELLO THERE, MR. DETECTIVE.
click
27TH PRECINCT, CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS.
OKAY.
TRACE IT.
OF COURSE. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PROBLEM, SIR?
THINK YOU COULD BE KIND ENOUGH TO HEAR ME OUT?
I'D PREFER NOT TO GIVE MY NAME BUT.. I HAVE SOME INFORMATION YOU'D BE VERY INTERESTED IN ACQUIRING.
glance

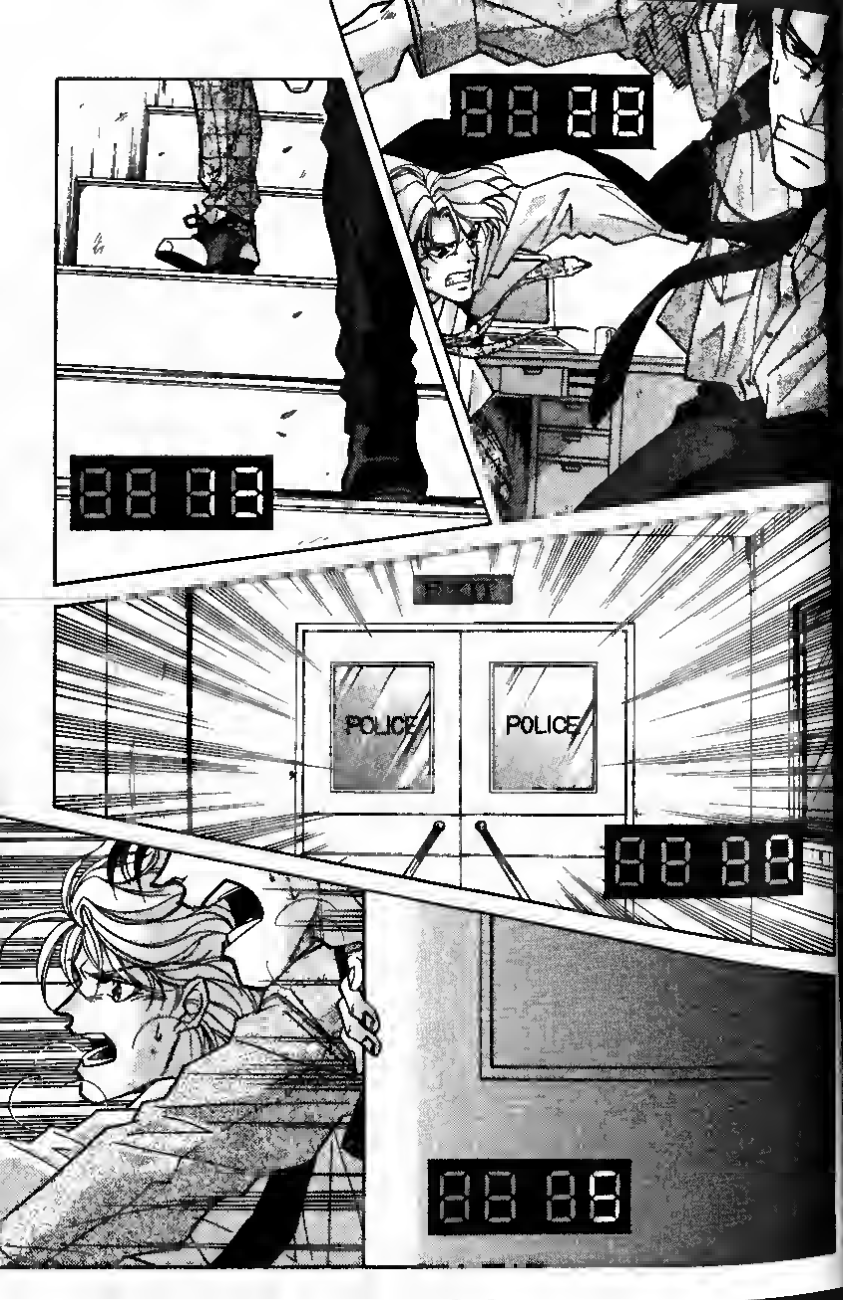
THIS IS AN EMERGENCY. PLEASE EVACUATE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY.
A BOMB THREAT'S BEEN CALLED IN. IT'S SET TO GO OFF IN TEN MINUTES.
AVOID MOVING OR TOUCHING ANYTHING THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO, AND CONCENTRATE ON GETTING OUT. I REPEAT..

2ND AND 3RD FLOORS ARE CLEAR TOO. NOW LET'S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE.
OKAY, I GOT EVERYONE CLEARED OUT OF THE BASEMENT AND 1ST FLOOR.

AND TELL EVERYONE NOT TO MOVE ANYTHING AROUND THAT THEY DON'T HAVE TO. LEAVE EVERYTHING AS IS AND JUST GET OUT!! NOW!
WHAA?!
DRAKE, I NEED YOU TO GET ON THE P.A. SYSTEM A.S.A.P. AND TELL EVERYONE TO EVACUATE THE BUILDING. THERE'S A BOMB SOMEWHERE IN HERE, AND WE'VE GOT TEN MINUTES TO GET THE HELL OUT!


YOU GO HIT THE EMERGENCY BELL AND CLEAR OUT THE 2ND AND 3RD FLOORS.
I'LL CLEAR OUT THE BASEMENT AND THE 1ST FLOOR.
WHAT THE-- ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!
ROGER THAT.

BRRRINNNNNNNNNNGGGGGGGGG.


POLICE
POLICE

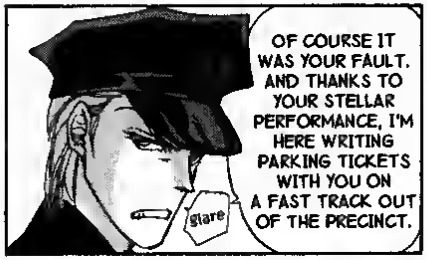
I KNOW, I KNOW.
HURRY UP AND GET IT! YOU'VE ONLY GOT ABOUT THREE MINUTES LEFT, YOU KNOW!
SHIT! HOLD UP! I FORGOT MY WALLET. I LEFT IT IN HERE YESTERDAY AND FORGOT TO PICK IT UP WHEN I CAME IN!
WHAT?
ACK!!
beep
00 30

HOLY SHIT.

HEY!! HOLO ON, GUYS.
CRAP.
jingle
clink
WHAT THE HELL? COME ON, DAMMIT! I'M A TAXPAYER TOO!! MY WORD SHOULD HAVE JUST AS MUCH SAY AS THE 'TARD WHO RATTED ME OUT!!
NOPE. NO CAN DO.
OH, COME ON. GIVE ME A BREAK, GUYS. I'LL MOVE IT RIGHT NOW.
ACTUALLY, IT WAS MORE LIKE AN HOUR. WE GOT A COMPLAINT ABOUT IT FROM ONE OF OUR TAXPAYERS.
I WAS ONLY HERE FOR TWO, MAYBE THREE MINUTES, TOPS, MAN.
WHAT THE HELL?

FAKE

WOW, YOU TOOK THE WORDS RIGHT OUT OF MY MOUTH.


OF COURSE IT WAS YOUR FAULT. AND THANKS TO YOUR STELLAR PERFORMANCE, I'M HERE WRITING PARKING TICKETS WITH YOU ON A FAST TRACK OUT OF THE PRECINCT.
Glare

GRR. OKAY, OKAY, NO USE GRIPING ABOUT SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST. IT CAN'T BE FIXED, SO JUST MOVE ON.
It's not like you stopped me or anything

Gee, thanks, partner.
COME ON, MAN, THAT WAS A TOTAL ACCIDENT. IT WASN'T MY FAULT AND YOU KNOW IT!!
THAT I GOT STUCK WORKING WITH SOME LOSER-REJECT COP WHO SEEMS LIKE HE BELONGS IN A POLICE ACAOEMY FLICK.
AND YO KNOW WHAT ELSE I CAN'T BELIEVE

WHAT ARE YOU TWO ARGUING ABOUT THIS TIME, HUH?
WHAT?!
HMM, HOW ABOUT, YES BECAUSE I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG
grr ARE YOU SERIOUSLY GOING TO PIN EVERYTHING BAD THAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU ON ME?!
THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY SINCE IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT. AND EXCUSE ME FOR GRIPING, BUT THE AMOUNT OF PAPERWORK I'VE BEEN DOING TO COVER UP YOUR ANTICS KEEPS ESCALATING. I HAVEN'T HAD ONE GOOD THING HAPPEN TO ME SINCE WE STARTED WORKING TOGETHER

BUT MY MOM'S STILL ALIVE!! H!!!!!!!!
VELL I CAN TAKE CARE OF THAT OO, WISE GUY!
IF YOU WANT TO PISS AND MOAN TO SOMEONE, WHY DON'T YOU GO AND DO IT TO SAINT PETER OR YOUR MOM IN HEAVEN BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE I'M ABOUT TO SEND YOU!!
SIGH.

click
THAT'S ENOUGH, DEE.

YOU'RE STILL TALKING? LET ME TELL YOU, I'M NOT IN THE BEST OF MOODS RIGHT NOW.
Crack

rip
He's a bit violent, this one.
LOOK, IF I WERE YOU, I'D JUST TAKE THE TICKET AND RUN. BUT I VALUE MY LIFE, YOU SEE.

MAN, WHAT A FRIGGIN' DRAG. WHY THE HELL AM I ISSUING TICKETS TO ILLEGALLY PARKED VEHICLES ANYHOW?
Cline

bow
bow
clap
URM, OKAY, SOUNDS LIKE A PLAN. THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!

Glare
SHEESH.

UH, YES, BUT I NAD TO MAKE A QUICK STOP BEFORE I WENT IN. TO BE NONEST, I'M A LITTLE LATE BUT...
ARE YOU NEADED FOR WORK, NOW?
.....
NELLO.
ON!
WELL, ACTUALLY, I'M JUST A SUBSTITUTE. THE NAME'S JOHN HALE.
YOU'RE BIKKY'S NEW TEACHER.
Okay, you're really starting to piss me off now.
OH, I GOT TEMPORARILY DEMOTED BECAUSE OF MY PARTNER.
This guy here
...I JUST COULDN'T NELP BUT STOP AND ASK WHY TNE TWO OF YOU ARE IN UNIFORM TODAY. I THOUGHT YOU WERE DETECTIVES.
straight out!
NO, TNAT'S OKAY, TNANKS. BESIDES, I THOUGNT YOU WERE NEADED TO QUEENS, CHIEF.
YEAN, THAT'S RIGNT. SEE YOU LATER THEN.
YOU KNOW WHAT THOUGH? SINCE YOU LOOK SO SPIFFY IN THOSE UNIFORMS, HOW ABOUT GOING BACK TO THEM FOR GOOD, HUH? MAYBE GET YOUR TENURE IN TRAFFIC? HMM?
'S YOUR WN DAMN ULT YOU DED UP RE, YOU FOOL.
CHIEF, MY POWERFUL, SUPER DETECTIVE-ING, TRUTH-SEEKING SOUL IS ABSOLUTELY WASTED IN TRAFFIC. COME ON, PUT ME SOMEWHERE ELSE, WILL YOU? PLEASE? I'M BEGGING.
CHIEF!!!
screech
UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN ONLY AFFORD TO PUNISN YOU SO MUCH BEFORE RETURNING YOU TO YOUR ACTUAL CASES. WHY DON'T YOU TWO NEAD OVER TO TNE BRONX NQ? WE'LL BE BASING OUR OPS TNERE FOR A WNILE.
EX-CUSE ME, OFFI-CERS!!
I'VE GOT SOMETNING I NEED TO CHECK UP ON OVER IN QUEENS. I'LL MEET UP WITN YOU TWO LATER.
YOU'RE NOT COMING WITH US, CHIEF?

I SEE.

HE YELLS AT US A LOT BUT HE'S GREAT, ACTUALLY. HE'S LIKE A SECOND FATHER TO US.

IT'S NO PROBLEM. BESIDES, THESE ARE FOR SOMEONE VERY SPECIAL TO ME.
YEAH, BUT IT'S GOT TO BE EXPENSIVE BRINGING THEM IN EVERYDAY.

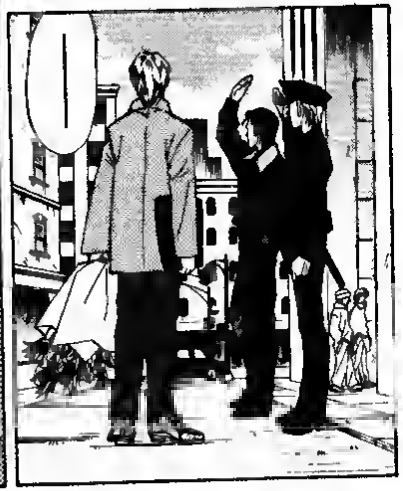
THEY'RE VERY BEAUTI-FUL. DON'T YOU THINK SO?
YOU SURE LIKE FLOWERS DON'T YOU, TEACH?

OH YEAH? YOU TRYING TO SNAG SOMEOHE IS AROUHD IT MS. HERE? JAHE? OH WAIT, I BET IT'S MS. MIRANDA, HUH?

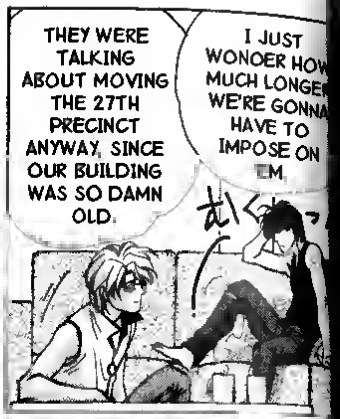
John Hale. Where have I seen him before?

THAT'S CHIEF SMITH-- ONE OF OUR BOSSES OVER IN INVESTIGATIONS.
IS HE ONE OF YOUR SUPERIORS?

GUESS I'M GETTING WAY TOO OLD. MY MEMORY IS SHOT.
I just can't think of where...



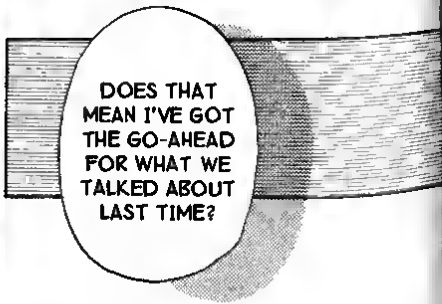
SO COME NEXT YEAR, WE WOULO HAVE BEEN MOVED TO A BRANO NEW BUILOING, ANYWAY. ONE THAT OOESN'T CRUMBLE EACH TIME A DRAWER IS SLAMMED SHUT.


THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT MOVING THE 27TH PRECINCT ANYWAY, SINCE OUR BUILDING WAS SO DAMN OLD.
I JUST WONOER HOW MUCH LONGER WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO IMPOSE ON 'EM.

HA, HA. MAYBE, BUT UNTIL THEN..
Can you maybe learn to sip- that thing like a human being. Maybe?
slurp
slurp
slurp
HMPH. BUT THAT'S NEXT YEAR, RIGHT? SO FOR ALMOST A YEAR WE'VE GOT TO BE INOEBTED TO THE BRONX STATION?

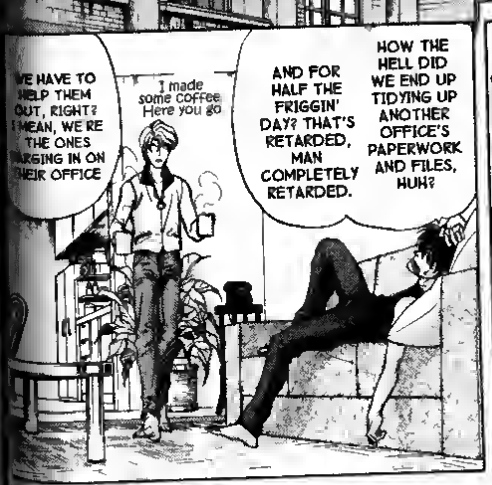
HUH?!
badump

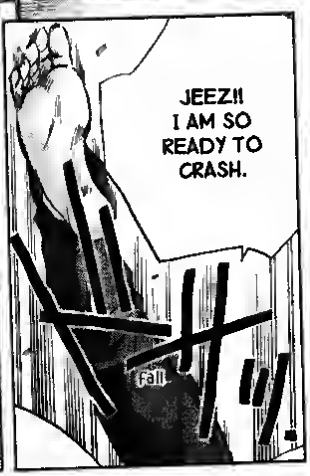
BY THE WAY, YOU WANT TO STAY THE NIGHT? MY PLACE IS CLOSER TO THE BRONX STATION THAN YOURS IS...


DOES THAT MEAN I'VE GOT THE GO-AHEAD FOR WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT LAST TIME?

UM, SURE. I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY THAT. AND I PROMISE YOU, I'LL SNAG 'EM GOOD.

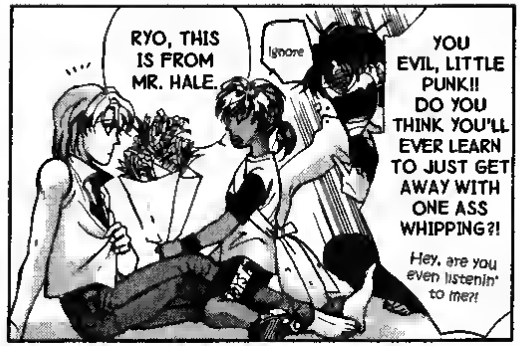
!?!
Um, we are talking about a woman here, right? Please, tell me I'm right. Right? Umm..
?
?


WE HAVE TO HELP THEM OUT, RIGHT? I MEAN, WE'RE THE ONES BARGING IN ON THEIR OFFICE
I made some COFFee. Here you go
AND FOR HALF THE FRIGGIN' DAY? THAT'S RETARDED, MAN COMPLETELY RETARDED.
HOW THE HELL DID WE END UP TIDYING UP ANOTHER OFFICE'S PAPERWORK AND FILES, HUH?


JEEZ!! I AM SO READY TO CRASH.
fall

.....
DON'T WORRY. I'LL BEHAVE. I'M JUST GOING TO SLEEP OVER SO MY COMMUTE'S SHORTER.
SIGH.
DEE?
YOU ALWAYS HAVE THIS CONFUSED, WORRIED, WHATEVER LOOK ON YOUR FACE.
BECAUSE OF THAT.. I-I JUST CAN'T KEEP CHASING AFTER SOMETHING I'LL NEVER GET.
BESIDES, EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T OUTRIGHT REJECT ME, I'M NOT DUMB.

What am I supposed to do?
What...?
I don't know.
I JUST DON'T KNOW ANYMORE..


RYO, THIS IS FROM MR. HALE.
....
Ignore
YOU EVIL, LITTLE PUNK!! DO YOU THINK YOU'LL EVER LEARN TO JUST GET AWAY WITH ONE ASS WHIPPING?!
Hey, are you even listenin' to me!!

YAHH!!
Get off!!
DAAA HHH!!

AS IN, YOUR TEACHER?
SYTT

OH, AND HE TOLD ME TO SAY "HI" TO THE CHIEF, TOO.
YEAH, HE BOUGHT TOO MANY SO HE THOUGHT OF YOU.

HMM?

I DOUBT THEY HAVE HIDDEN MEANING, SHERLOCK. HE BOUGHT TOO MANY, THAT'S ALL.
I'M MORE CONCERNED WITH WHY HE THOUGHT OF YOU. WHAT DO THESE FLOWERS MEAN, ANYHOW?
Does he want to get into your pants, too?

TO THE CHIEF?!

BUT I AM SORRY.

I'M SORRY.

DON'T APOLOGIZE. IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, DAMMIT.

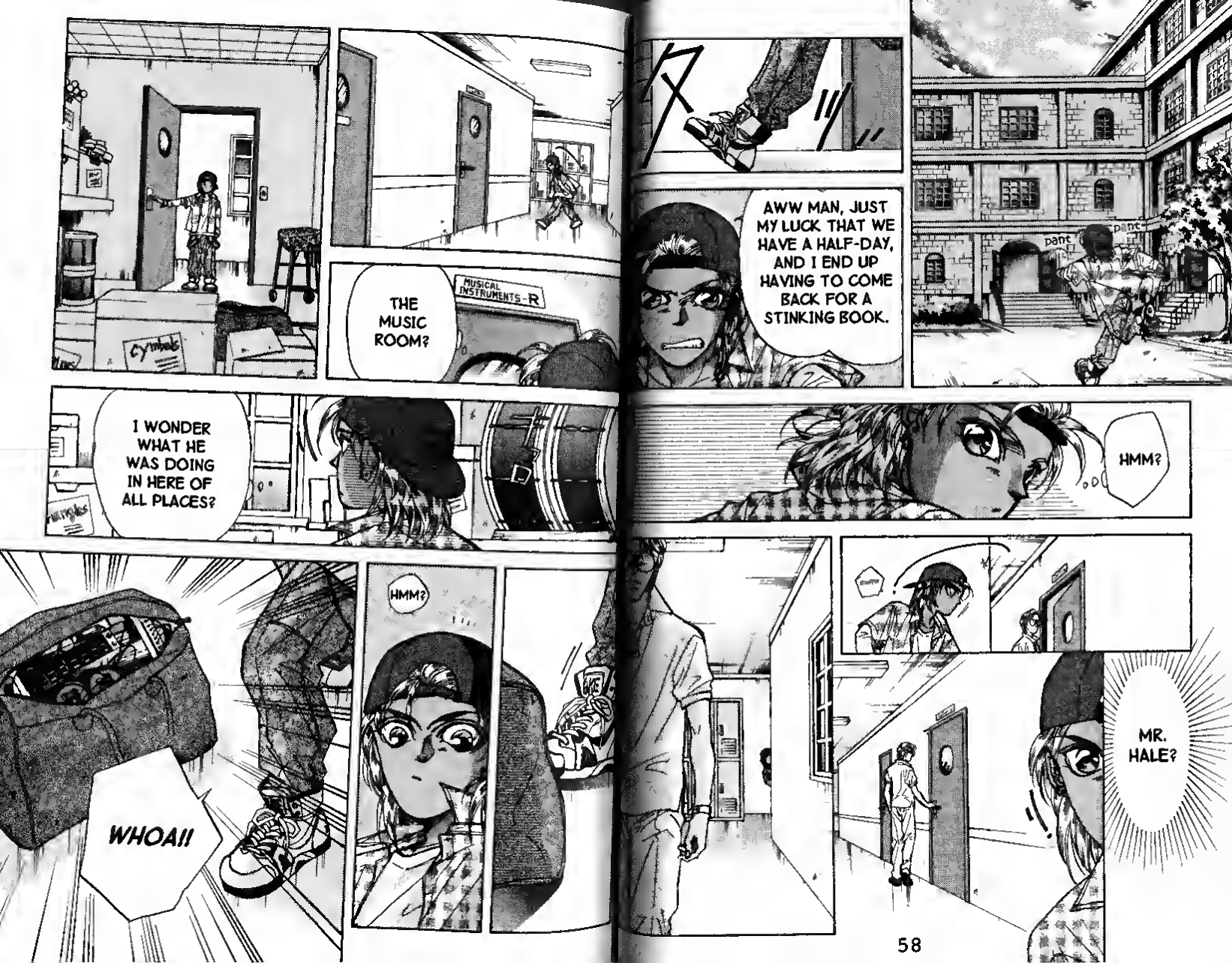
I'M HOME!! WOOHOO!!
NOTE: YES, THIS IS HIS HOME, TOO.

stare
OH, HEY, BIKKY. WELCOME BACK. YOU'RE EARLY TODAY.
Damn it
crick

QUEENS -- 7:00 P.M.
TODO
WHO'S THERE?!
JOHN, IS THAT YOU?!
BZZZT
THE NAME'S SMITH. I'M A COP.
HELLO. IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?

THAT'S THE SMELL OF GUN-POWDER.
HEY-- THEY SORT OF SMELL LIKE FIREWORKS.
SNIFF SNIFF
SMELL THIS, WILL YA?
SNIFF
JOHN HALE, EH?
SURE, LL LOOK NTO IT.
YOU WANT TO CHECK HIM OUT?
.....
THERE MIGHT BE A CONNECTION AFTER ALL.
HE MIGHT NOT HAVE ANY CONNECTION TO THE BOMBING INCIDENT AT THE 27TH PRECINCT, BUT THEN AGAIN...

HT HUSBAND IS DEAD.
HE WAS SHOT AND KILLED 10 YEARS AGO.
BUT OF COURSE... YOU ALREADY KNEW THAT, DIDN'T YOU?
AFTER ALL, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SHOT HIM, REMEMBER?
I
AND IS THAT THE ONLY REASON?
I WAS JUST IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, SO I THOUGHT I'D STOP BY.
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE TODAY?
N BOTH INCIDENTS, HE MANNER IN WHICH HE EXPLOSIVES WERE MANUFACTURED AND SET UP, WELL..
THREE DAYS AGO, THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION AT THE 27TH PRECINCT. BEFORE THAT, THERE WAS A BOMBING IN THE STORAGE AREA OF A LOCAL SCHOOL.
CAPTAIN SMITH...
IT MATCHES YOUR HUSBAND'S OLD M.O.

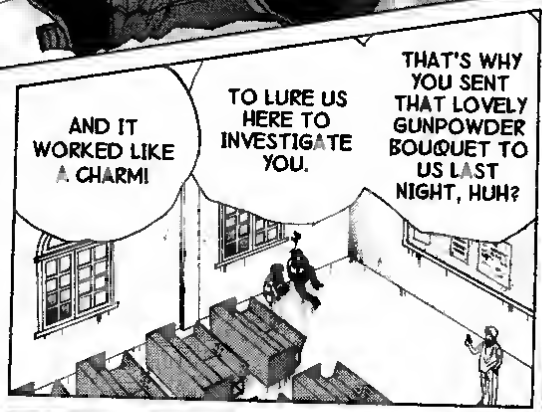

cymbals
THE MUSIC ROOM?
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS-R
I WONDER WHAT HE WAS DOING IN HERE OF ALL PLACES?
WHOA!!
HMM?
AWW MAN, JUST MY LUCK THAT WE HAVE A HALF-DAY, AND I END UP HAVING TO COME BACK FOR A STINKING BOOK.
pant
pant
HMM?
MR. HALE?

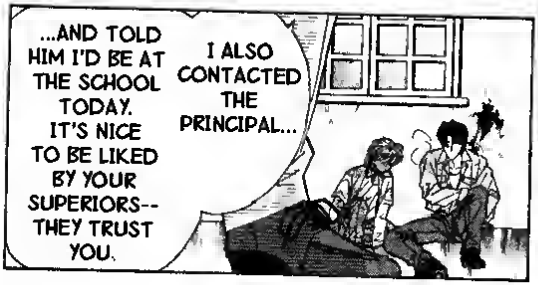
HE MUST HAVE COME HERE TO INVESTIGATE MR. HALE!
DEE!!
OH NO! HE'S GONNA WALK RIGHT BY!
Mrrgg nnh!
CLANK!
fling
slide

DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING AT SCHOOL, BIKKY?
I'M SORRY FOR DOING THIS TO YOU, BIKKY, BUT YOU SAW SOMETHING YOU DEFINITELY WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO. I'M AFRAID THE ONLY PLACE YOU'LL BE GOING NOW IS A LONG, LONG DETENTION.
SHHH. QUIET NOW. I REALLY DON'T LIKE IT WHEN PEOPLE MAKE BIG FUSSES OVER NOTHING. NOT THAT THERE'S ANYONE ELSE AROUND TO HEAR YOU MAKE A FUSS...
!!

Y'KNOW. I REALLY DON'T LIKE BEING ORDERED AROUND LIKE THIS.
NOW, KEEP GOING 'TIL YOU HIT THE WINDOW.
YOU'LL LEARN TO LIKE IT IF YOU WANT TO KEEP BREATH-ING.
ALL RIGHT, NOW STAY LIKE THAT AND FACE RIGHT. SEE THA CLASSROOM NEXT DOOR? GO IN.
KICK
HAPPY?!
AND DON'T TRY TO BE A HERO.
YOU TOO, BIKKY.
IC-A
BIKKY!!
STOP RIGHT THERE!!
CLICK
TTTT
TOSS YOUR GUN OVER TO ME AND PUT YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR HEAD.

OH MY GOD!! DEE!!
URGG GHHH!!


AND IT WORKED LIKE A CHARM!
TO LURE US HERE TO INVESTIGATE YOU.
THAT'S WHY YOU SENT THAT LOVELY GUNPOWDER BOUQUET TO US LAST NIGHT, HUH?


...AND TOLD HIM I'D BE AT THE SCHOOL TODAY. IT'S NICE TO BE LIKED BY YOUR SUPERIORS-- THEY TRUST YOU.
I ALSO CONTACTED THE PRINCIPAL...

AND I CAN'T HAVE YOU WANDERING OFF WHENEVER YOU FEEL LIKE IT.
I HAD YOU COME HERE FOR A REASON...

click
NO. NOT YET.

WHA--?!
YAAGH!

ASK THAT GODDAMN MURDERER!
HE LOCKED THE DOOR, DEE!
lock
WHO ELSE? WHERE ARE YOU? YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET UP WITH ME A WHILE AGO.. OH, AND BEFORE YOU MAKE UP AH EXCUSE, GUESS WHAT?
RYO? IS THAT YOU?
CLICK
DEE? WHAT'S YOUR LOCA-TION?!
beep
beep
beep beep beep

ERE'S JUST MUCH MORE O DO HERE, BUT I'VE WASTED ALL Y PRECIOUS TIME HAVIHG O DEAL WITH YOU TWO.
I GOT THROUGH THE MUSIC ROOM NEXT DOOR AND THE CLASSROOM IH THIS BUILDING.
I MAHAGED TO SET UP 15 BOMBS ALL AROUHD CAMPUS BEFORE YOU TWO SHOWED UP.
pl plp
SO YOU HAD IT ALL PLANNED OUT. NOT BAD, NOT BAD AT ALL. UNFORTUNATE FOR ME, THOUGH.
WHAT-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW?
pip
pip
SORRY BOUT HAVING TO KILL OU TWO IN THE BLAST BUT, OH WELL, WHAT CAN WE DO, HMM? I EED THE EXTRA TIME AND, WELL, I WOULD LIKE THIS TO E QUITE THE PECTACLE.
HOW ABOUT I GIVE THEM FIVE MIHUTES, HMM? THAT SOUHDS FAIR.
RIGHT HOW, I'M SETTIHG THE TIMER FOR THE FUSES. I'M SURE YOUR FRIEHDS WILL START SHOWIHG UP SOOH, SO LET'S SEE...
I SUGGEST YOU ASK OUR DEAR FRIEND CHIEF SMITH.
IF YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW WHY...
WHAT DO YOU MEAH? WHAT ARE YOU PLANHIHG? WHY THE HELL ARE YOU DOIHG THIS?
WAIT A MIHUTE. YOU HEED THE TIME... A SPEC-TACLE?
THERE WE GO, ALL SET. ISN'T THIS COOL? I CAN SET THIS THING TO GO OFF WHENEVER I WANT.
beep

YOU'VE GOT THREE MINUTES BEFORE THE WHOLE PLACE GOES SKY HIGH.
NO! DON'T LET ANYONE IN HERE! HE'S GOT FIFTEEN BOMBS READY TO GO OFF ALL OVER THE PLACE, AND YOU GUYS DON'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHERE THEY ARE. YOU'RE NOT GONNA MAKE IT. TRUST ME.
I'LL GET THE BOMB SQUAD IN THERE RIGHT--
THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TIME TO SEEK AND DEFUSE ANYTHING, MUCH LESS TOTE AROUND AN INJURED BODY, SO STAY THE HELL PUT. GOT IT?
I'M PRETTY SURE I CAN HANDLE THE ONE IN THIS ROOM.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I'LL BE FINE.
BUT DEE--!!
SO TRUST ME, OKAY? DON'T WORRY.
WE JUST GOT AN ANONYMOUS TIP THAT BIKKY'S SCHOOL'S BEEN WIRED TO BLOW.
IT'S FROM THE SAME PSYCHO WHO CALLED BEFORE ABOUT THE PRECINCT BOMBING.
EE? YOU ERE?!
HEY, JUST SO I KNOW. WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW?
I'M STANDING OUTSIDE THE FENCE SURROUNDING THE SCHOOL'S PERIMETER. I'M ABOUT TO TAKE SOME OF THE BOYS IN TO--
DON'T!
RYO?!
YEAH, BUD. I'M HERE.
THAT BASTARD SHOT MY LEG. I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE SOON.
RIGHT NOW, I'M SITTING ON TOP OF A BOMB.
HUH?!

DEE.. DEE'S INSIDE..
NOT ENOUGH TIME?! THAT'S NOT THE FRIGGIN' POINT!! DEE'S IN THERE SO I'M GOING IN!!
WE WON'T MAKE IT. WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME.
WHAT? THEN WHY THE HELL AR WE STANDIN AROUND HERE WE HAVE TO GET IN THER AND--
SLAM
NOBODY'S GOING ANYWHERE!!
OF COURSE I'LL WORRY!!
DEE!!
LATER.
pip
Snif!
RYO!
CLICK
HOW COME THE BOMB SQUAD'S STILL OUT HERE? ARE THE GATES LOCKED OR SOMETHING?
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

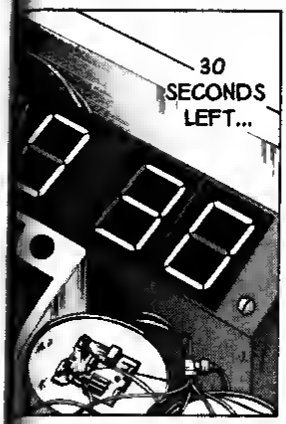
ONE THING I KNOW FOR SURE... THIS IS THE 2ND FLOOR SO...
HEY, I KNOW IT MIGHT BE A BIT LATE, BUT TWO QUESTIONS, 'KAY?
ONE, ARE YOU REALLY GONNA BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS BOMB? AND TWO, IF NOT, YOU DO HAVE A PLAN FOR GETTING US OUT OF HERE, RIGHT?
WELL, SORTA.
HERE YOU GO.
THANKS.
WHEN YOU HIT THE GROUND, RUN LIKE HELL, OKAY?
BAMN
WAH!!
DAMMIT! IF DEE'S IN THERE...
WHY ARE YOU OF ALL PEOPLE TRYING TO STOP ME FROM SAVING HIM?
glare
TELL ME WHY, RYO!!
OKAY.
THE ONE ON TOP OF THAT DESK OVER THERE?
ALL RIGHT, NOW CAN YOU GET ME THAT PEN-HOLDER?
I KNOW, I KNOW.
OKAY, SET IT OVER THERE... GENTLY... GENTLY.
clunk
OKAY...

GET OUT OF HERE, BIKKY!!
GET YOUR ASS AS FAR AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL AS POSSIBLE!!
DEE!!
B-BUT--
I SAID, *RUN*, YOU STUPID SIMIAN BRAT!!
AND IF YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT LOOKING BACK, I'LL COME DOWN THERE AND SMACK SOME SENSE INTO YOU!!
I...

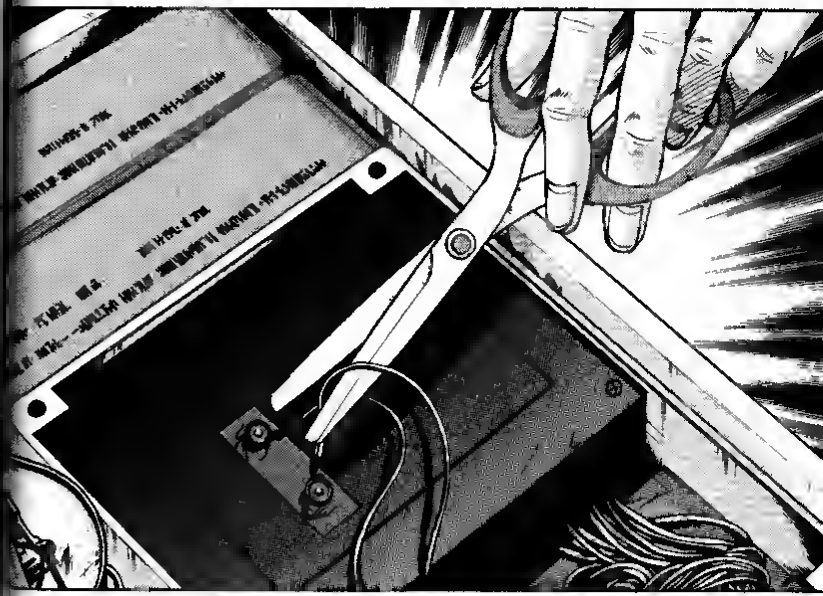
fling
EEHHHH?!
DAAA HHHH HHHH HHHH HHH

WELL, LET'S SEE HERE. WHERE'S THE STAR OF THE SHOW ANYHOW..
Stupid child safety scissors friggin' hard to cut with
Bingo!
FREAKIN' HIPPIE. RIGGING A BOMB TO A VASE. WHAT'S NEXT-- AN EXPLODING TREE?
WHISTLE!
Clank
SO SIMPLE IT MAKES ME WANT TO CRY.
ONE FAKE WIRE THAT DOES SQUAT AND ONE TRIGGER WIRE THAT LIGHTS THE PLACE UP.

IF YOU DIE, I'LL SMACK THE SHIT OUT OF YOU, TOO!!
YOU HEAR ME, YOU DORK?!
HEH..
IKKRASSH


30
SECONDS
LEFT...

EENIE,
MEENIE,
MINEY,
MOE.
NOW
THEN...
snip
snip



pant
I GOT THROWN OUT THE WINDOW BUT..
pant
pant

pant
I JUST CAME TO GET SOME STUFF I FORGOT AND, AND, THEN, RYO, IT'S DEE. HE.. HE'S..
pant
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?
pant
I..

WHERE'S DEE, BIKKY?!

pant
THAT MUSIC ROOM WE WERE IN WHEN YOU VISITED LAST TIME ON PARENTS' DAY?
pant
UMM.. DO YOU REMEMBER..
pant

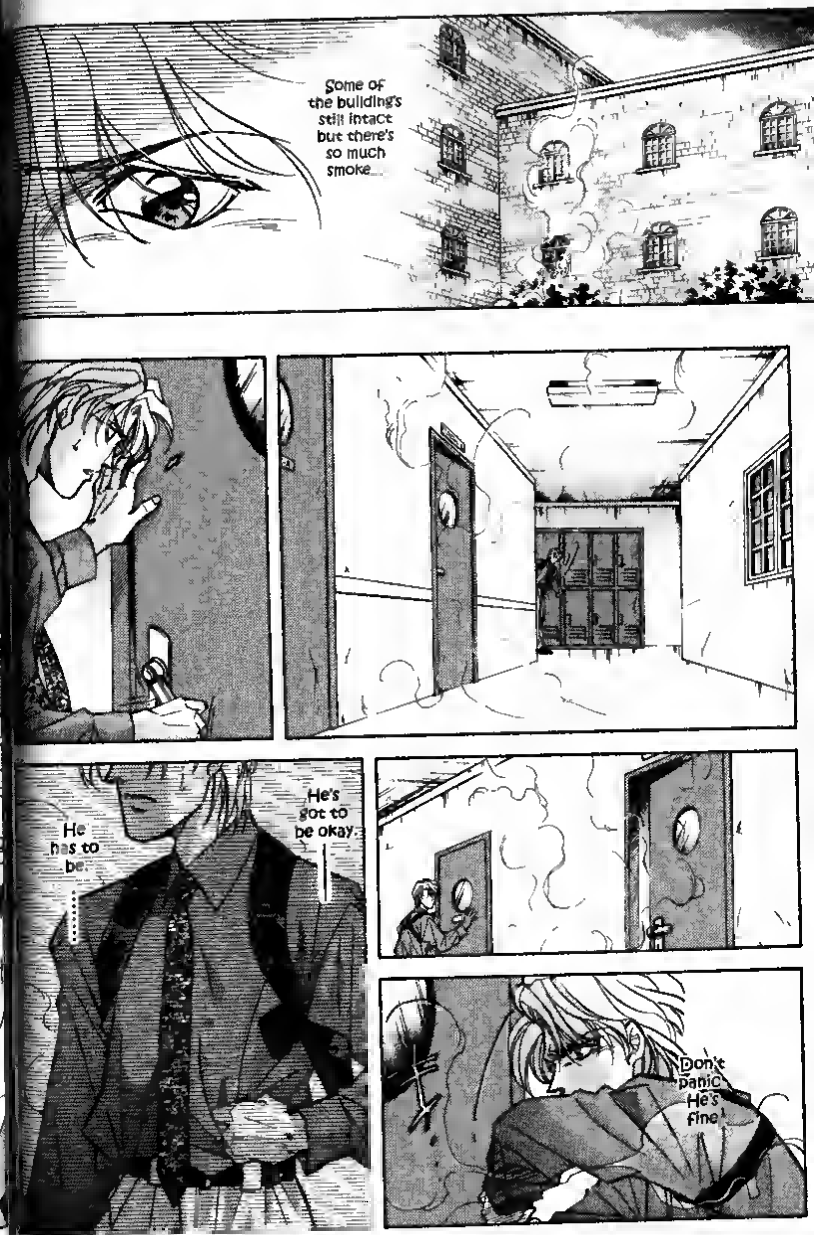
RYOOO!!

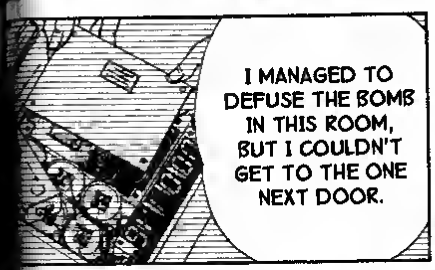
BIKKY?!

RYO!!

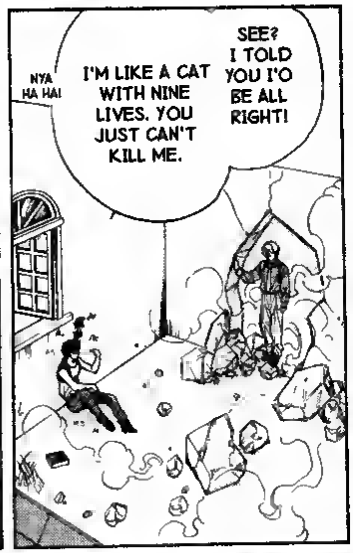
!!
RYO!!
grrrrrrr
Tell me, and you won't get hurt, twerp!!
WHERE'D HE RUN OFF TO, HUH?!
Gee, I dunno! It seems to have totally slipped my mind.
silence

SOME-ONE OUT THERE ?!
YO. LONG TIME NO SEE.


Some of the building's still intact but there's so much smoke...
He has to be.....
He's got to be okay.
Don't panic. He's fine.


I MANAGED TO DEFUSE THE BOMB IN THIS ROOM, BUT I COULDN'T GET TO THE ONE NEXT DOOR.

LUCKILY FOR ME, THE ONE NEXT OOOR...
HAD A WEAK CHARGE OR SOMETHING. IT TOOK THE WALL OUT, BUT THAT'S ABOUT IT.


SEE? I TOLD YOU I'O BE ALL RIGHT!
I'M LIKE A CAT WITH NINE LIVES. YOU JUST CAN'T KILL ME.
NYA HA HAI

W-WHAT IS IT, DUDE? YOU GONNA SAY SOMETHING OR JUST STARE AT ME?
?

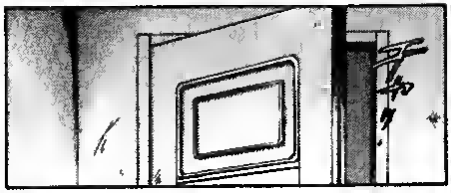
HUH?
YOU.. SAID.. TO..
YOU SAID FOR ME TO JUST WAIT THERE SO...
I...I DON'T EVER WANT TO FEEL THIS WAY AGAIN.
NEVER AGAIN!

RYO..
squeeze

THAT REMINDS ME--WHERE'S THE CHIEF?
I WONDER WHAT HE WAS HOPING TO GAIN BY BLOWING UP A SCHOOL.
DAAHHH!! OFF!! GET OFF ME, YOU MORON!! AHH, OFF I SAY!!
DEE, I WAS SOOO, SOOO WORRIED ABOUT YOU. GOD, YES I WAS.
HMM
OOH, OOH, I KNOW.
THE CHIEF?
THIS IS SMITH.
THANKS.
CHIEF, IT'S FOR YOU, SIR.
HE GOT A CALL RIGHT BEFORE WE LEFT THE STATION...
?!

SORRY, GUY. I WON'T EVER ASK YOU TO DO THAT AGAIN, OKAY?
pat
HUH? UMM, BUT THIS... IT ISN'T WHAT IT, UMMM, IT JUST SORTA HAPPENED SO..
AND WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING WITH HIM, HUH?! YOU DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO GO HELP HIM, BUT YOU'LL REAP ALL THE GLORY?!
Who do you think you are holding on to him like that?!
RYO!!
pant.
heave
Notes: Finally figured out their whereabouts.
DEE...
HEY, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, RYO DOES GET LIKE THAT DOESN'T HE? AND QUITE OFTEN, TOO.
AND BY THE WAY, WHAT'S UP WITH THE POSTAL WORKER-LIKE OUTBURSTS, HUH? I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE THE CALM ONE.
And not only that, but then you rack up a ton of votes because of it!! So not fair!!
NOTE: BTW, RYO CAME IN #1 IN A RECENT READER'S POPULARITY POLL. BUT HOW? WHY?!

HE'S A WHOLE OTHER STORY.



UH, HUH... ALL RIGHT. YEAH...

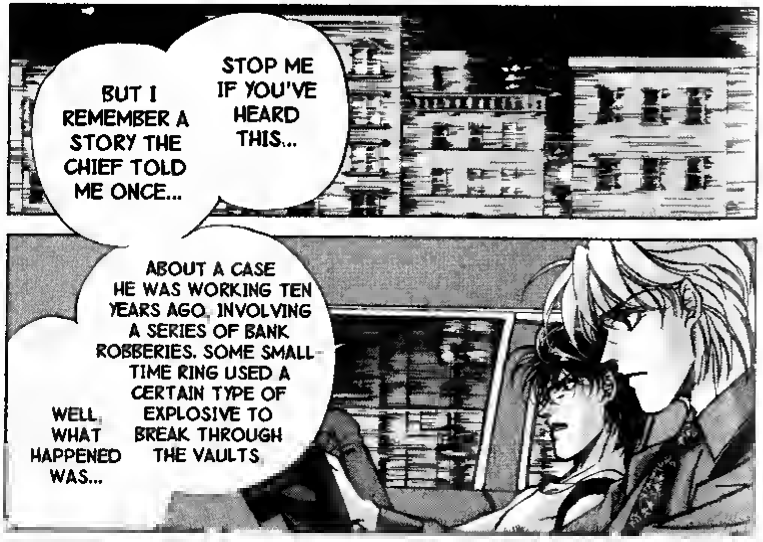
YES, SIR.
I'LL BE HERE IF YOU NEED ME.
JJ, I NEED TO GO TAKE CARE OF SOMETHING.

"OUT OF HERE"? WHAT DO OU MEAN?
ALL RIGHTY THEN, LET'S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE. RYO, GO BRING THE CAR AROUND.

I BOUND THE WOUND AND THE BLEEDING'S PRETTY MUCH STOPPED, SO I'LL BE FINE. BUT THE CHIEF...
DEE, YOU SHOULDN'T BE ANYWHERE BUT A HOSPITAL RIGHT NOW.

IT'S A QUEENS ADDRESS.

THAT'S RIGHT, SMART GUY.
THE NAME'S JOHN HALE. I'M ROBERT HALE'S SON.

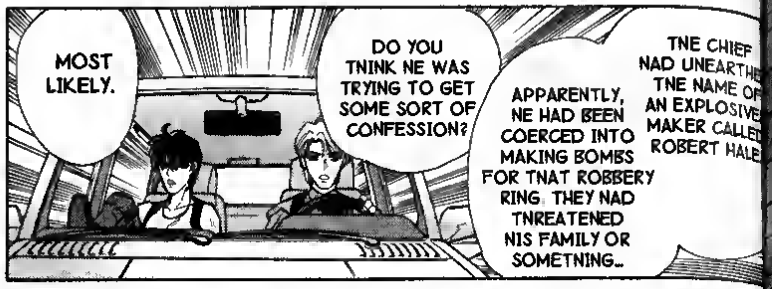

STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS...
BUT I REMEMBER A STORY THE CHIEF TOLD ME ONCE...
ABOUT A CASE HE WAS WORKING TEN YEARS AGO, INVOLVING A SERIES OF BANK ROBBERIES. SOME SMALL-TIME RING USED A CERTAIN TYPE OF EXPLOSIVE TO BREAK THROUGH THE VAULTS.
WELL, WHAT HAPPENED WAS...

GAHI
BAMN BAMN BAMN

HELLO THERE, DETECTIVE SMITH.
tap

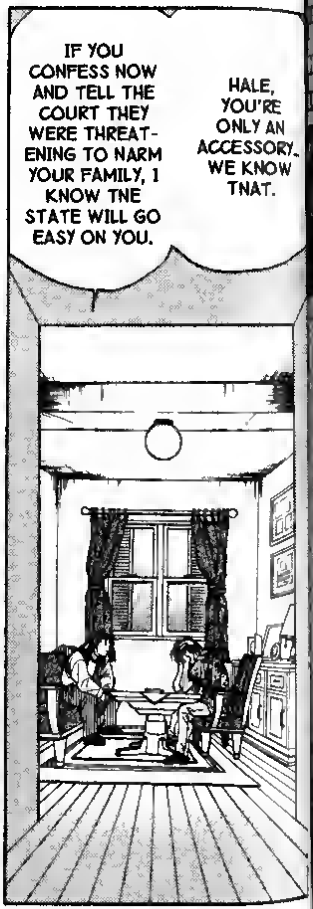
SO... YOU'RE ROBERT'S...

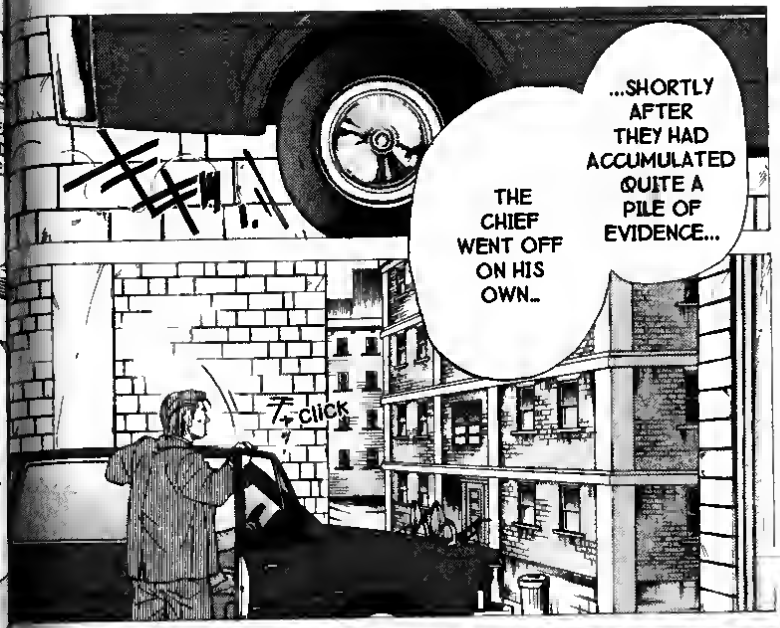
GRR GH.


MOST LIKELY.
DO YOU THINK HE WAS TRYING TO GET SOME SORT OF CONFESSION?
APPARENTLY, HE HAD BEEN COERCED INTO MAKING BOMBS FOR THAT ROBBERY RING. THEY HAD THREATENED HIS FAMILY OR SOMETHING...
THE CHIEF HAD UNEARTHED THE NAME OF AN EXPLOSIVES MAKER CALLED ROBERT HALE.

DO YOU REALLY THINK IT'S THAT SIMPLE?!
DON'T WAIT LONGER OR IT'LL JUST GET WORSE. LET'S GO DOWN TO THE STATION, 'KAY?

LET ME WORRY ABOUT YOUR FAMILY! I'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM. I SWEAR IT!!
NO WAY, MAN! THEY'LL BE SLAUGHTERED!
DO YOU THINK THAT MY CONFESSION'S GONNA STOP ANY OF THEM FROM COMING AFTER MY FAMILY?


IF YOU CONFESS NOW AND TELL THE COURT THEY WERE THREATENING TO HARM YOUR FAMILY, I KNOW THE STATE WILL GO EASY ON YOU.
HALE, YOU'RE ONLY AN ACCESSORY. WE KNOW THAT.

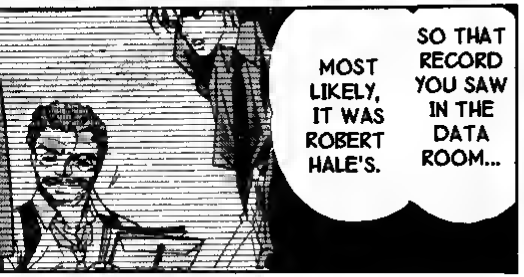

...SHORTLY AFTER THEY HAD ACCUMULATED QUITE A PILE OF EVIDENCE...
THE CHIEF WENT OFF ON HIS OWN...
click

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK. KEEP THE ENGINE RUNNING IF YOU WANT.

DON'T WORRY, PARTNER.
WARREN... I'M NOT GETTING A GOOD VIBE ABOUT THIS, MAN.

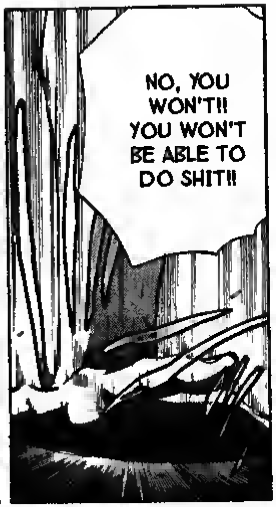
--THIS ENDS HERE AND NOW!
SHUT THE HELL UP! WE'RE ALL DEAD, DAMMIT!! I WON'T LET THEM COME AND KILL US--
CALM DOWN, HALE. WE CAN WORK THROUGH THIS. I KNOW WE CAN.
DAD?!
ROBERT!

SHOT HIM DEAD.
HE SHOT HIM?!


MOST LIKELY, IT WAS ROBERT HALE'S.
SO THAT RECORD YOU SAW IN THE DATA ROOM...

HALE!!

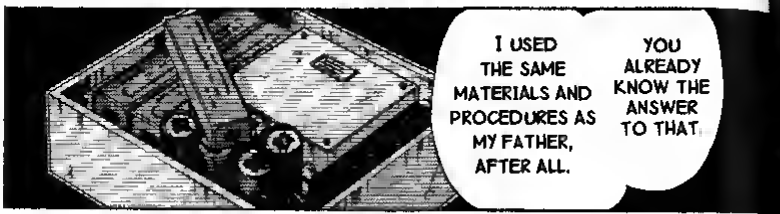
bang
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THESE GUYS ARE CAPABLE OF.
WE'RE DEAD, DON'T YOU SEE? ME. MY FAMILY..


NO, YOU WON'T!! YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO DO SHIT!!

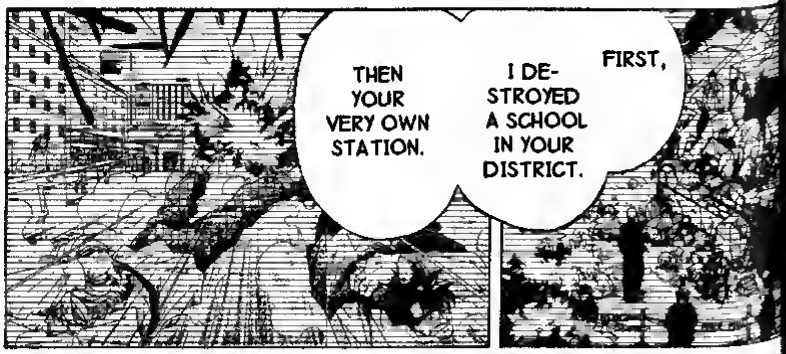
ALL OF US--

--WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE!!

THE RECENT BOMBINGS...
THOSE WERE ALL YOU?


I USED THE SAME MATERIALS AND PROCEDURES AS MY FATHER, AFTER ALL.
YOU ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT.

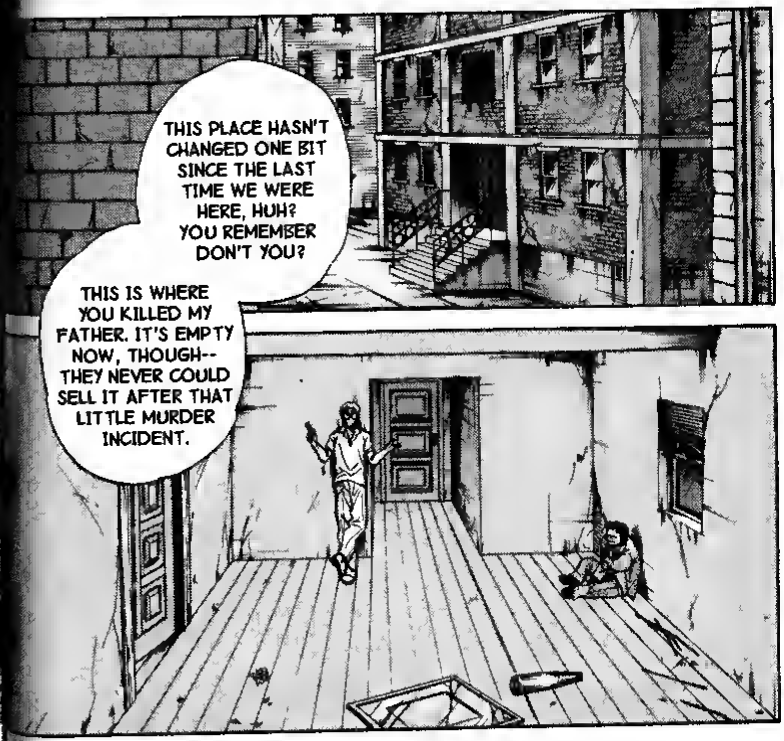
YOU PROBABLY ALSO KNOW WHY I DID IT TOO, HUH? REVENGE, PURE AND SIMPLE.

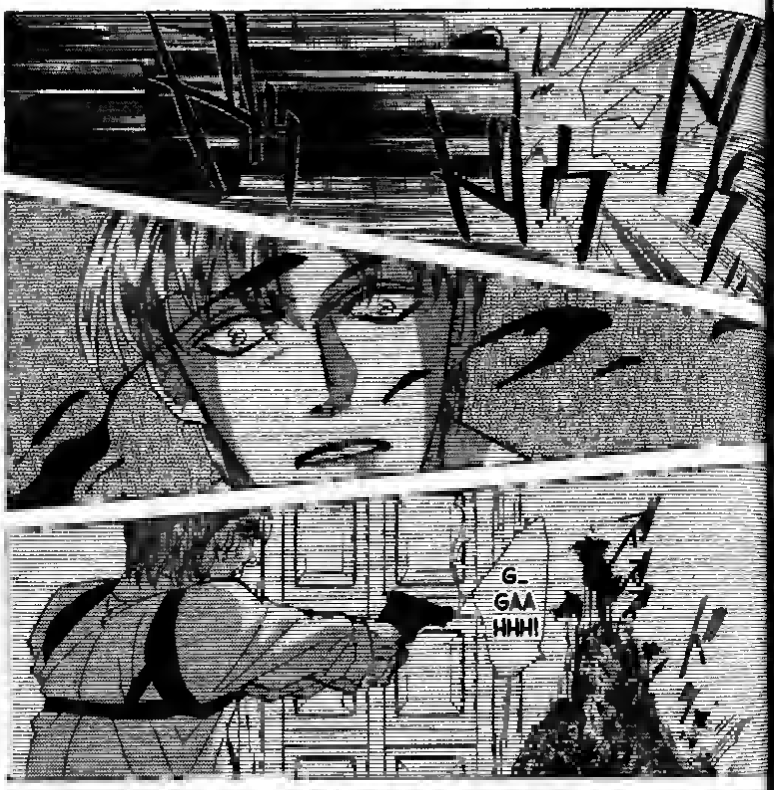

THEN YOUR VERY OWN STATION.
I DE-STROYED A SCHOOL IN YOUR DISTRICT.
FIRST,

HMM?

HALE. THEN JOHN MUST BE ROBERT'S..
HE'S ROBERT HALE'S SON.

SO WE'RE TALKING REVENGE HERE? FOR HIS FATHER'S DEATH?
YEAH. BUT THAT'S NOT THE WHOLE STORY...


THIS PLACE HASN'T CHANGED ONE BIT SINCE THE LAST TIME WE WERE HERE, HUH? YOU REMEMBER DON'T YOU?
THIS IS WHERE YOU KILLED MY FATHER. IT'S EMPTY NOW, THOUGH-- THEY NEVER COULD SELL IT AFTER THAT LITTLE MURDER INCIDENT.


G-
GAA
HHH!

BUT NOW, IT'S YOUR TURN.

FOR THE FINALE, I HIT YOUR GOOD OLD SCHOOL AGAIN. ONLY THIS TIME I MADE SURE ONE OF YOUR DEAR LITTLE SUBORDINATES AND A YOUNG CHILD WERE KILLED IN THE BLAST.

JUST LIKE YOU DID TO ME!

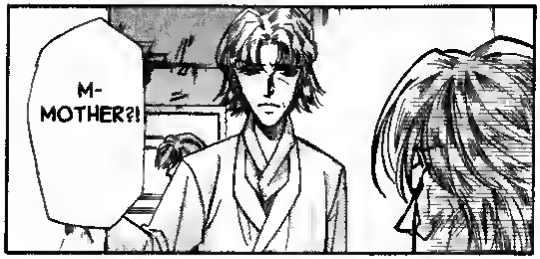
OH, I REMEMBER. DEE, WASN'T IT?
WHAT WAS HIS NAME AGAIN? THE REALLY LOUD-MOUTHED COP?
WHAT ?!

MY ONLY REGRET WAS THAT I DIDN'T GET TO KILL THEM OFF IN FRONT OF YOU.

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU DIE...
RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY EYES!
HALE!!

SPEAKIN' OF WHICH, SHUT THE HELL UP ABOUT THAT ALREADY.
HAH! THAT'S SOME RICH TALK FROM A MURDERER'S LAP DOG.
PLUS I'M ONE LUCKY S.O.B.
I'LL READ YOU YOUR RIGHTS MYSELF, HALE, ON THE WAY BACK TO THE STATION.
CLICK
QUIT YOUR WEAK-ASSED BELLYACHING! YOU'RE THE ONE RUNNING AWAY FROM THE TRUTH!!
YEAH, THANKS TO YOU TWO.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SIR?
TIME HE KNEW WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.
I THINK IT'S TIME, SIR.
CAPTAIN.
DEE!! WHAT ARE YOU..?!
THE TRUTH?!
I'VE DEFUSED TOUGHER BUGGERS THAN THE ONE YOU LEFT FOR ME BACK THERE.
BECAUSE I'M NOT AS DUMB AS I AM PRETTY, THAT'S WHY.
YOU?! BUT HOW?!

THAT_ THAT CAN'T BE_


M- MOTHER?!

BUT HE'S NOT, JOHN.
IT'S NOT TRUE. YOU'RE MAKING THIS UP!

DON'T BE. THAT WAS THE PERFECT ENTRANCE. THANKS, JJ.
I'M SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG TO TRACK HER DOWN.

F- FATHER? HE TRIED TO_ KILL ME_?

DETECTIVE SMITH ONLY SHOT IN DEFENSE. YOUR DEFENSE_
TEN YEARS AGO, YOUR FATHER DID RAISE THAT KNIFE AGAINST YOU.

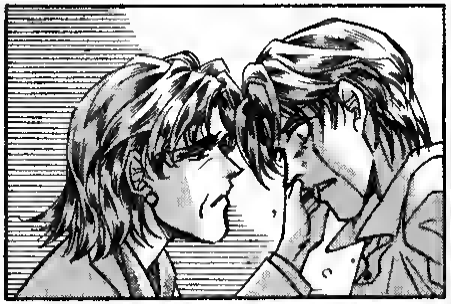
...YOUR FATHER WASN'T IN HIS RIGHT MIND.
TEN YEARS AGO, WHEN OUR CHIEF SHOT YOUR FATHER_

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "WHAT REALLY HAPPENED"?!

BUT THAT SOMEONE WASN'T THE CHIEF. THINK BACK HARD TO THAT DAY, HALE, AND I KNOW YOU'LL REMEMBER.
AND TRUE, HE DID TRY TO TAKE OUT SOMEONE WITH IT.
TRUE, HE PICKED UP A KNIFE.
YOUR FATHER WAS TRYING TO KILL YOU!

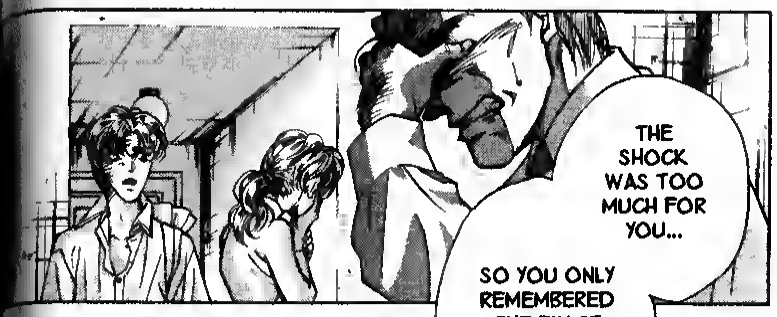
AND FOR THAT, I'VE NEVER FORGIVEN MYSELF. I'M TRULY SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS.
IT STILL DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT I KILLED YOUR FATHER.

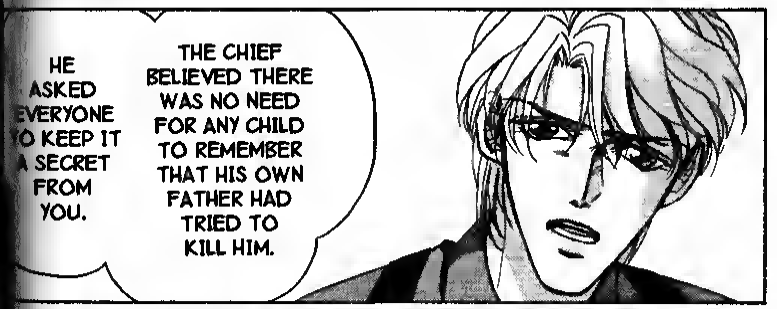
...NOT TELLING JOHN THE TRUTH TEN YEARS AGO.
THE ONLY MISTAKE WE MADE WAS...
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG, CAPTAIN SMITH.



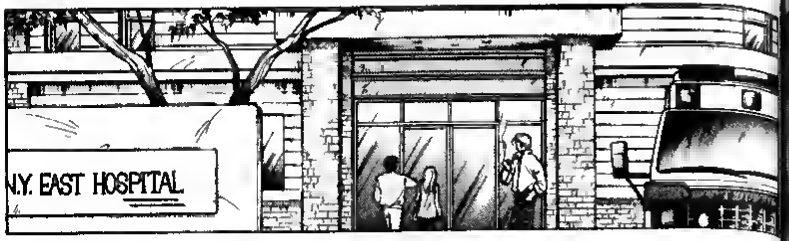
CAPTAIN SMITH?

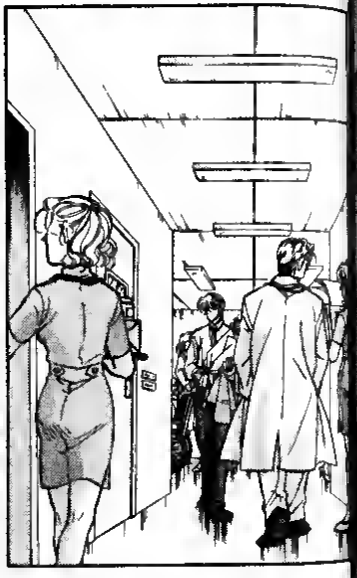
JOHN?


THE SHOCK WAS TOO MUCH FOR YOU...
SO YOU ONLY REMEMBERED THE EXACT MOMENT YOUR FATHER WAS SHOT.

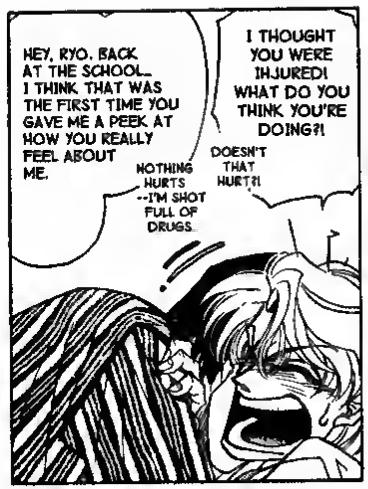

HE ASKED EVERYONE TO KEEP IT A SECRET FROM YOU.
THE CHIEF BELIEVED THERE WAS NO NEED FOR ANY CHILD TO REMEMBER THAT HIS OWN FATHER HAD TRIED TO KILL HIM.

THIS CAN'T BE TRUE.





A FEW HOURS LATER, JOHN HALE APPEARED IN PERSON AT THE BRONX STATION WITH A FULL, SIGNED CONFESSION.

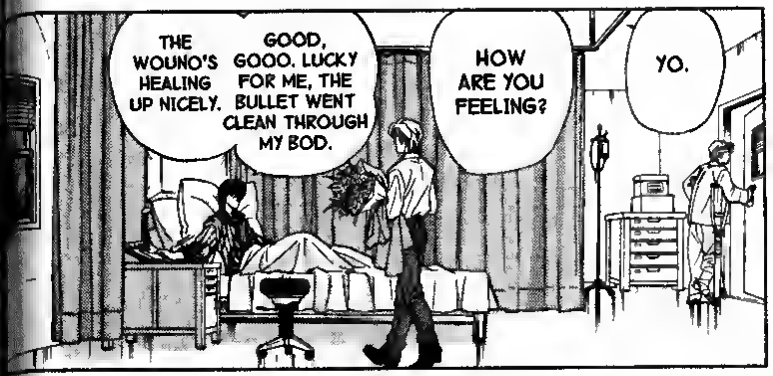

HEY, RYO. BACK AT THE SCHOOL... I THINK THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME YOU GAVE ME A PEEK AT HOW YOU REALLY FEEL ABOUT ME.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE INJURED! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
NOTHING HURTS --I'M SHOT FULL OF DRUGS.
DOESN'T THAT HURT?!

WA AHH HH!!
yank

DAMMIT, DEEE!!

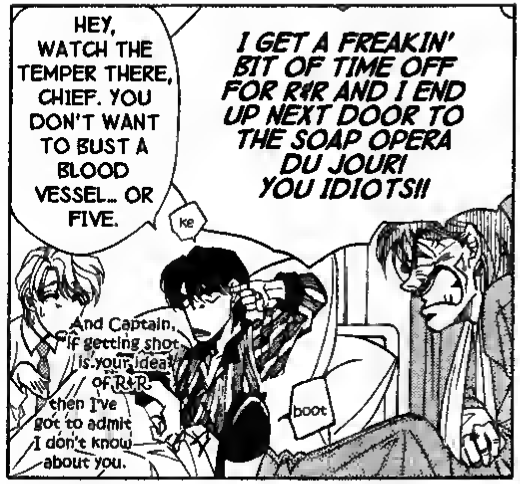
I DON'T EVER WANT TO FEEL THIS WAY AGAIN.

I COULD HAVE SWORN YOU WERE ABOUT TO SAY SOMETHING, BUT THEN YOU CAUGHT YOURSELF AND CLAMMED UP INSTEAD.
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU REMEMBER IT BUT A WHILE BACK, WE GOT INTO A FIGHT AND I ASKED YOU WHY THE HELL YOU WERE SO MAD AT ME.

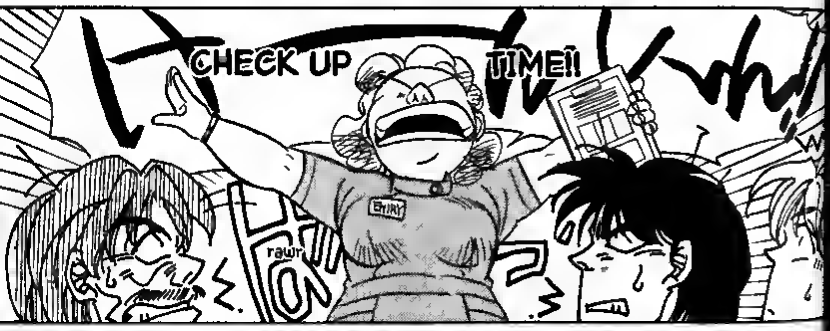

THE WOUND'S HEALING UP NICELY.
GOOD, GOOO. LUCKY FOR ME, THE BULLET WENT CLEAN THROUGH MY BOD.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
YO.

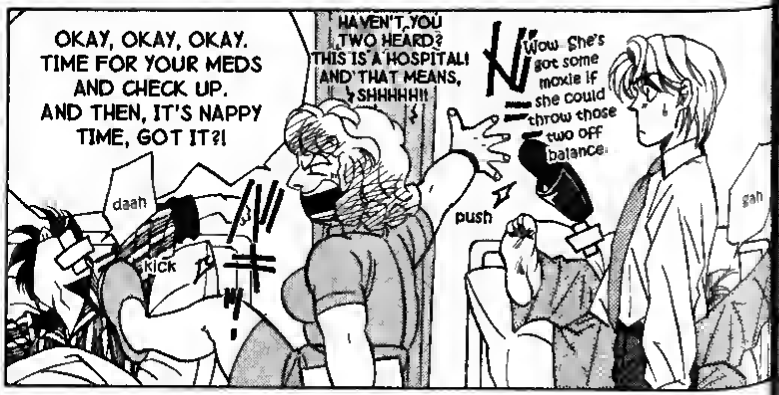
SNICKER. I'LL BE ON MY BEST BEHAVIOR.
slide
I'LL BE BACK ON MY FEET IN NO TIME. DON'T CHEAT ON ME WHILE I'M OUT, THOUGH.

HMM? WHAT'S THE MATTER?


HEY, WATCH THE TEMPER THERE, CHIEF. YOU DON'T WANT TO BUST A BLOOD VESSEL... OR FIVE.
I GET A FREAKIN' BIT OF TIME OFF FOR R&R AND I END UP NEXT DOOR TO THE SOAP OPERA DU JOUR! YOU IDIOTS!!
ke
And Captain, if getting shot is your idea of R&R then I've got to admit I don't know about you.
boot

CHIEF?! YOU'RE SHARING HIS ROOM?!
THAT'S SOME CRAPPY INSURANCE PLAN.
heh heh


CHECK UP TIME!!
rawr


OKAY, OKAY, OKAY. TIME FOR YOUR MEDS AND CHECK UP. AND THEN, IT'S NAPPY TIME, GOT IT?!
daah
kick
HAVEN'T YOU TWO HEARD? THIS IS A HOSPITAL! AND THAT MEANS, SHHHHH!!
push
Wow. She's got some moxie if she could throw those two off balance.
gah

I...

WHAT YOU SAID BACK THERE ... IS THAT HOW YOU REALLY FEEL?

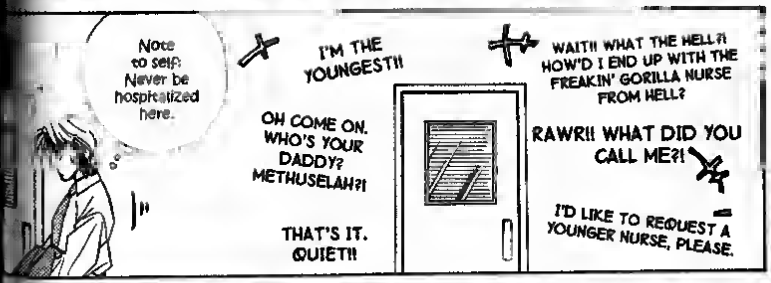
VHSSH
GAAHHHHH!! SHUT THE HELL UP ALREADY!!

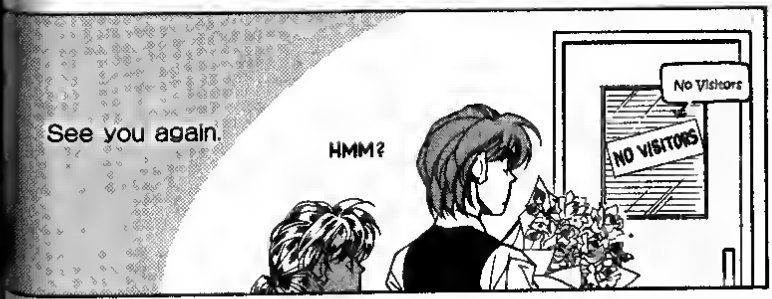
FAKE
act.12

THAT'S ENOUGH FROM YOU, MR. LAYTNER. LIGHTS OUT. GOOD NIGHT!!
AH!!
push

WELL, I THINK THAT'S MY CUE TO LEAVE NOW, ISN'T IT. TAKE CARE, YOU TWO.
HAULT

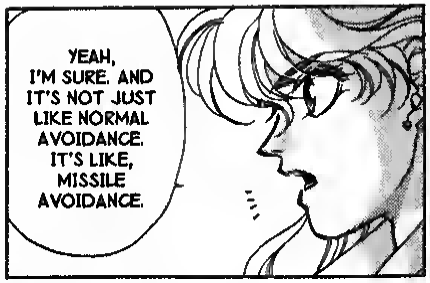
AH!
HEY!! WAIT! RYO! I'M NOT DONE ASKING YOU ABOUT--

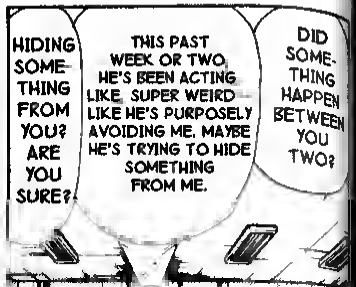

Note to self: Never be hospitalized here.
I'M THE YOUNGEST!!
OH COME ON. WHO'S YOUR DADDY? METHUSELAH?!
THAT'S IT. QUIET!!
WAIT!! WHAT THE HELL?! HOW'D I END UP WITH THE FREAKIN' GORILLA NURSE FROM HELL?
RAWR!! WHAT DID YOU CALL ME?!
I'D LIKE TO REQUEST A YOUNGER NURSE, PLEASE.

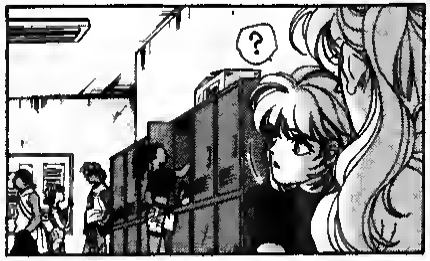

See you again.
HMM?
No Visitors
NO VISITORS

stare
YOU LIKE IT?
SEE THAT RIHG IN THE MIDDLE THERE? I JUST THIHK IT'S SO CUTE.
YEAH, I DO.
WHATCHA LOOKIN' AT?
JUST LOOKIHG AT IT, HUH?
SURE.
$ 200
Pt 950
HOLY SHIT!!
THE PRICE ISH'T TOO CUTE THOUGH.
WELL, IT IS PLATINUM. AND IT'S BY A PRETTY FAMOUS DESIGNER.
IT'S OKAY, THOUGH, I'M HAPPY JUST LOOKING AT IT.
ACCESSORY
SWEET PEA

FAKE

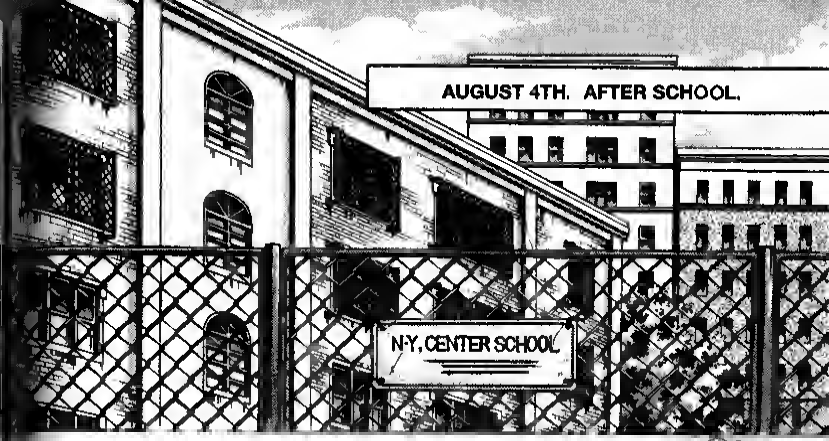

YEAH, I'M SURE. AND IT'S NOT JUST LIKE NORMAL AVOIDANCE. IT'S LIKE, MISSILE AVOIDANCE.


HIDING SOMETHING FROM YOU? ARE YOU SURE?
THIS PAST WEEK OR TWO, HE'S BEEN ACTING LIKE SUPER WEIRD-- LIKE HE'S PURPOSELY AVOIDING ME. MAYBE HE'S TRYING TO HIDE SOMETHING FROM ME.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN BETWEEN YOU TWO?

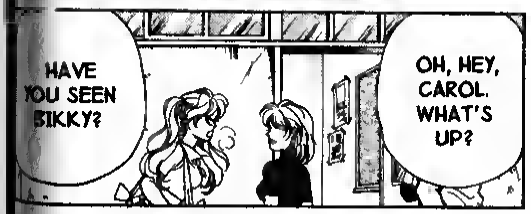

?

What's he doing talking with Jill? She's, like, a total tramp!
I MEAN, SHE'S NOT A BAD PERSON ON THE WHOLE, BUT STILL...
ABOUT

CATCH YA LATER!
CAROL?


AUGUST 4TH. AFTER SCHOOL.
N.Y. CENTER SCHOOL

LASS!

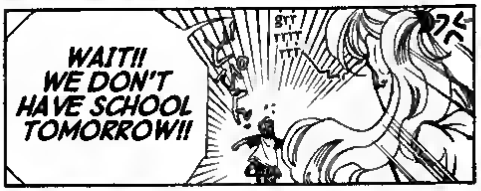

HAVE YOU SEEN BIKKY?
OH, HEY, CAROL. WHAT'S UP?

DAMMIT! HE GOT AWAY AGAIN!!
HMM, THAT'S ODD. WHERE'D HE GO? HE WAS RIGHT THERE, I SWEAR.
BIKKY? HE WAS JUST OVER--

run

LOOK, I'M LATE FOR SOMETHING. I'LL CATCH YOU AT SCHOOL TOMORROW, OKAY? BYE, BYE.
MAKE IT UP? THIS IS THE SECOND TIME YOU'VE CANCELLED ON ME! HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!

SOMETHING SUDDENLY CAME UP, OKAY? I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU, THOUGH, I PROMISE.
WHAT? BUT WHY? WE, LIKE, TALKED ABOUT THIS TWO WEEKS AGO.
CIAO!

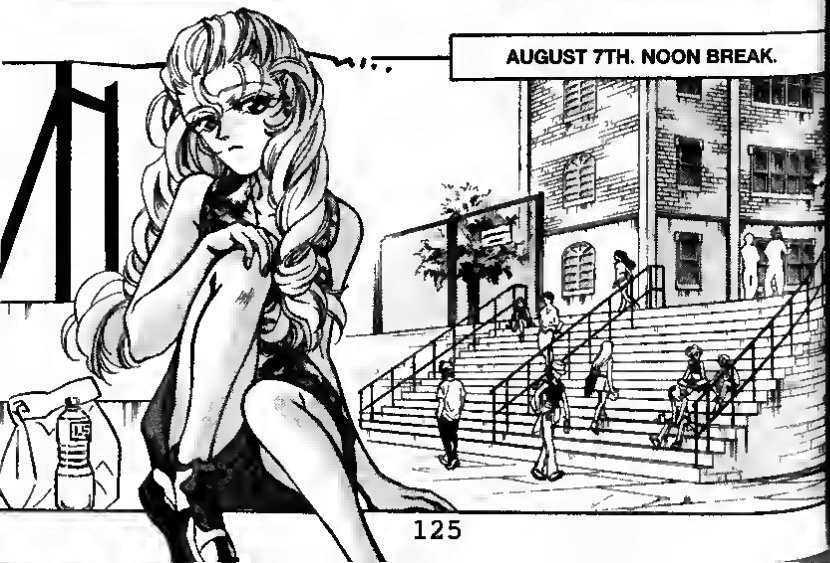

WAIT!! WE DON'T HAVE SCHOOL TOMORROW!!

OKAY, GOTTA JET. THANKS FOR HELPING ME OUT, JILL.
NO PROBLEM, BIKKY. SEE YOU LATER.

OH, CRAP.
BIKKY!!
Ooh, it's Carol.

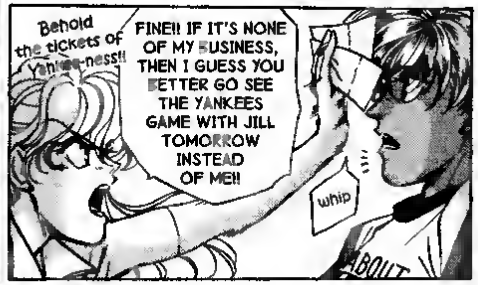
DARN IT.

WAAH!
SO, HOW'D SHE HELP YOU OUT, HUH?!

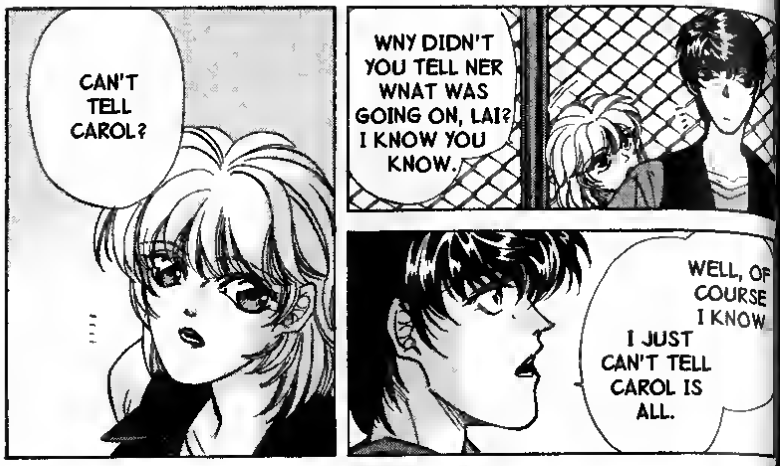

AUGUST 7TH. NOON BREAK.

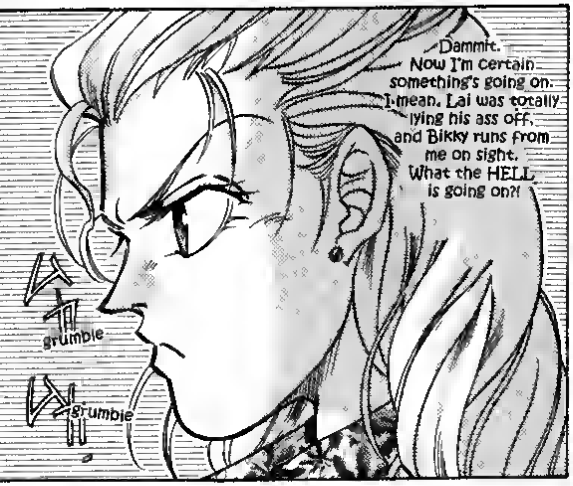
ACK! CRAP.
I CAN'T GO TOMORROW, CAROL.

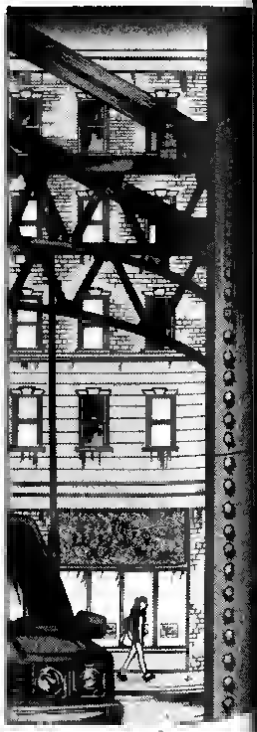
SHEESH, CAROL. IT'S REALLY NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, Y'KNOW.
rage
ABOUT


Behold the tickets of Yankee-ness!!
FINE!! IF IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS, THEN I GUESS YOU BETTER GO SEE THE YANKEES GAME WITH JILL TOMORROW INSTEAD OF ME!!
whip
ABOUT

IT'S NOT THAT MY AUNT WOULD BE ALL MAD IF I DID HAVE A PARTY BUT, YOU KNOW, SHE'S DONE SO MUCH FOR ME ALREADY. BESIDES..
HMM? NAH. I'D FEEL BAD ABOUT HAVING ONE. IT'S NOT REALLY MY PLACE, AFTER ALL.
ARE YOU GONNA HAVE A PARTY? INVITE SOME FRIENDS OVER TO HANG OUT OR SOMETHING?
Really? I thought you'd be the party type.
Not really.
LASS..
WHAT'S YOUR TRAGEDY, HUH? IS THE WALL THAT INTER-ESTING TO STARE AT?
...WITHOUT HIM.
IT'S, IT'S NOTHING REALLY. IT'S JUST... IT'S JUST SO BORING...
HMMPH. AND EXACTLY WHO ARE YOU TALK-ING ABOUT, HUH?
Ku fu fu
TO INVITE TO YOUR PARTY ANYWAY, HUH?
HEE, HEE. OH, I GET IT. THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON YOU WANT...
WHY, WHO ELSE BUT--
HUH?!
BIKKY!!
WELL, DUH, IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY TOMORROW, REMEMBER?
HMM? WHY?
OH YEAH. I TOTALLY FORGOT.
WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE COLOR?
SAY, CAROL...


CAN'T TELL CAROL?
WNY DIDN'T YOU TELL NER WNAT WAS GOING ON, LAI? I KNOW YOU KNOW.
WELL, OF COURSE I KNOW.
I JUST CAN'T TELL CAROL IS ALL.


Dammit. Now I'm certain something's going on. I mean, Lai was totally lying his ass off, and Bikky runs from me on sight. What the HELL is going on?!
grumble
grumble



GRR!! WNY DOES HE KEEP RUNNING AWAY FROM ME?!
BIKKY!!
dash

DON'T BE LATE, DUDE.
CRAP!! GOTTA RUN. SEE YOU AFTER SCHOOL, MAN!
Bye
Bye

YOU KNOW WNAT'S GOING ON DON'T YOU, LAI? SPILL IT!!
Stare

SKIIINNNNNNNNGGGGGGGGGG.
ON NEY GUESS BREAK IS OVER, NUN? IT'S TNE WARNING BELL.

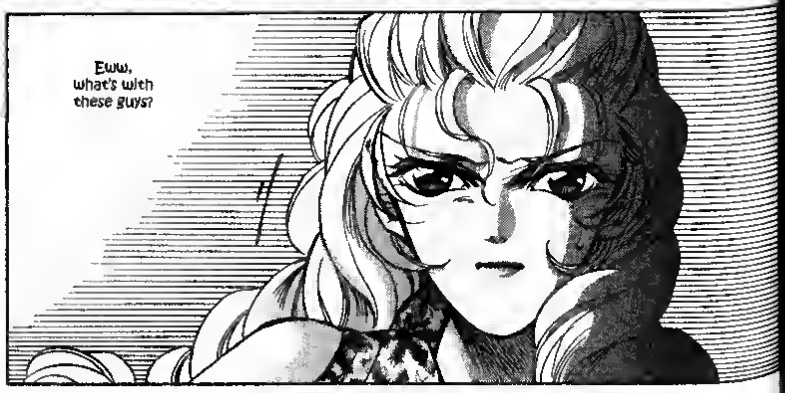
OKAY, OKAY.
IF I FIND OUT THAT YOU DO KNOW SOMETHING, YOU'RE DEAD! YOU HEAR?!

NUN? WNO ME? URM, I DON'T KNOW ANYTNING. NOPE, NO, MA'AM.
grin

!!

HMMM.

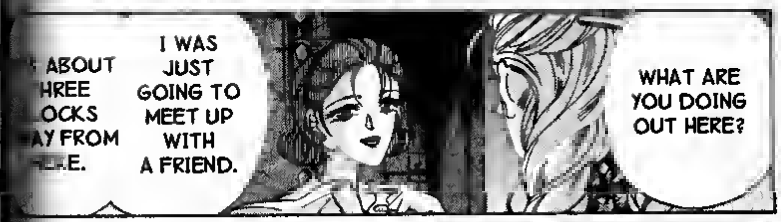
"NOT LONG" MY ASS. IT'S BEEN FIFTEEN MINUTES ALREADY.


Eww, what's with these guys?

OH, HIYA, CAROL.
JILL.

aaaaaahhhhh
DAAHHH! THIS IS TOTALLY PISSING ME OFF!!

HMM?


ABOUT THREE LOCKS AWAY FROM HERE.
I WAS JUST GOING TO MEET UP WITH A FRIEND.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

OH, NO. IT SHOULDN'T.
--WILL IT TAKE LONG?

HMM, OKAY, THEN I'LL GO WITH.

I JUST HAVE TO DROP SOME-THING OFF.
IF YOU'RE GOING WHERE I THINK YOU'RE GOING, YOU'RE CRAZY. THAT'S RIGHT BY THE SLUMS. NO GIRL IN HER RIGHT MIND WOULD HEAD THERE ON HER OWN, ESPECIALLY THIS LATE IN THE EVENING.
THREE BLOCKS FROM HERE? WAIT.

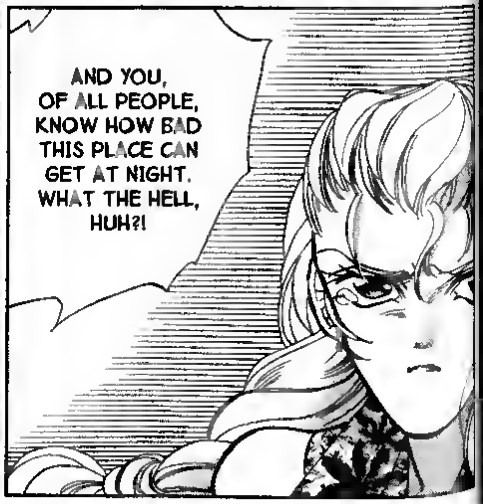
WHAT THE? WHO THE HELL ARE YOU, HUH?!
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?!
I WOULDN'T TRY THAT IF I WERE YOU-- COPS'LL BE HERE SOON.
I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU GUYS.

HEY !!
GRRRRR--!!

YOU IDIOT!!

WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINKING COMING OUT HERE AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT, HUH?!
THOSE GUYS WERE FRIGGIN' RAPISTS, DAMMIT!! THEY'VE GOT RAP SHEETS THE LENGTH OF MY ARM FOR ALL THEIR OFFENSES.

That looks like a tear
THINK SHE'LL CRY?
DOUBTFUL. KNOWING CAROL, SHE'LL PROBABLY--

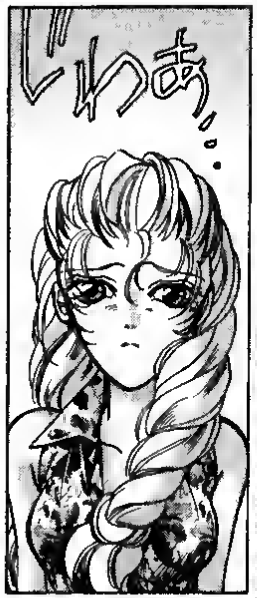

AND YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE, KNOW HOW BAD THIS PLACE CAN GET AT NIGHT. WHAT THE HELL, HUH?!

DAMN!!

LAI, IT'S ME I TOOK ONE OUT. THE OTHER TWO FLED EAST.
ROGER THAT. I'LL RADIO IT IN AND CHECK IT OUT A.S.A.P.
TAP
Click

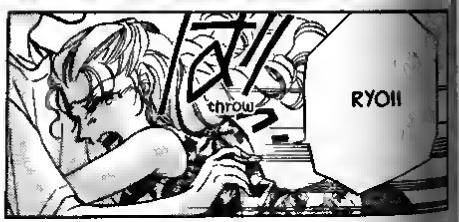
YOU OKAY?
I- I'M FINE.
BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
Yeah, you're right.
Oh, Carol's there too

Flick


しゃっ!!

WHAT'S THE MATTER? AND WHERE'S BIKKY? ISN'T HE WITH--
OH, HEY, CAROL.

Don't touch my ass, you pervert!!
ow
punch
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
OH, AND, UH, WHEN DID THAT START BEING YOUR BUSINESS, HUH?
Heh... that was a good one, Joe!


throw
RYO!!

Let love doctor Dee solve all your problems.
!!
THERE, THERE, TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT, HON.
feel, feel, feel

RYO!!
RYO!! ARE YOU IN?!

open

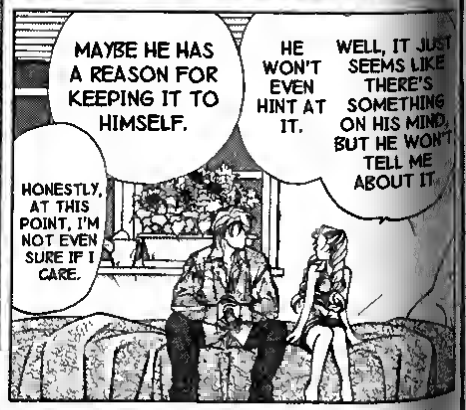
WELL, SCREW YOU VERY MUCH TOO!!
OWW WWW !!

I SEE.
WHAT HAPPENED, EXACTLY?

WELL, I'M NOT TOO HAPPY TO HEAR BIKKY'S GOTTEN INTO SOMETHING WITHOUT TELLING ME AGAIN.
THE WAY I SEE IT, HE ONLY YELLED AT YOU BECAUSE HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

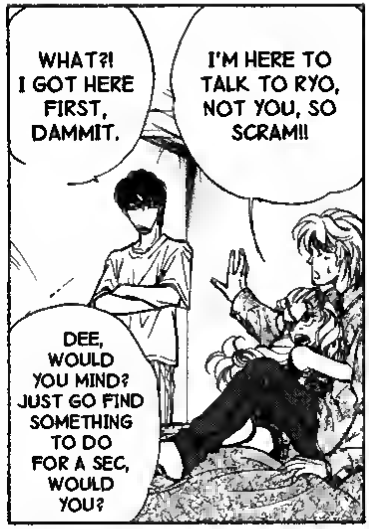
I KNOW THIS IS SELFISH, BUT I JUST HATE THAT THERE'S...
A PART HE WON'T SHARE WITH ME. A PART OF HIM I'LL NEVER SEE.

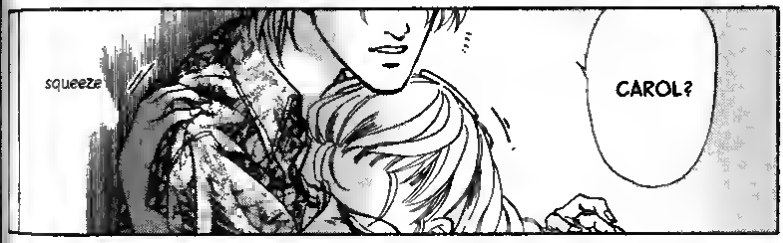
NO, NO, NO, I UNDER-STAND THAT.
I DESERVED TO GET YELLED AT FOR DOING A STUPID THING LIKE THAT. WHAT I WAS WORRIED ABOUT IS...


WELL, IT JUST SEEMS LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING ON HIS MIND, BUT HE WON'T TELL ME ABOUT IT.
HE WON'T EVEN HINT AT IT.
MAYBE HE HAS A REASON FOR KEEPING IT TO HIMSELF.
HONESTLY, AT THIS POINT, I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF I CARE.

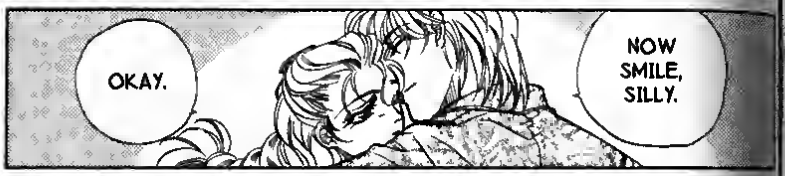
FINE!!! OKAY, SEE YA. SHEESH!!!

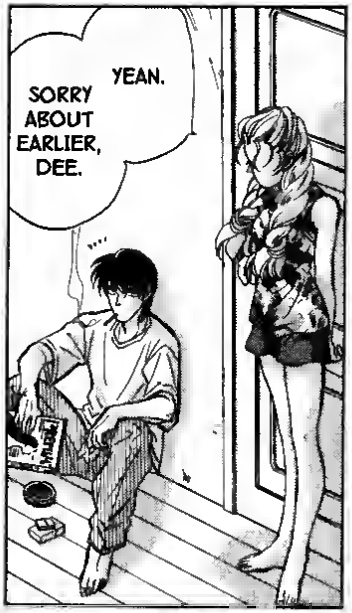
SO, WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU?

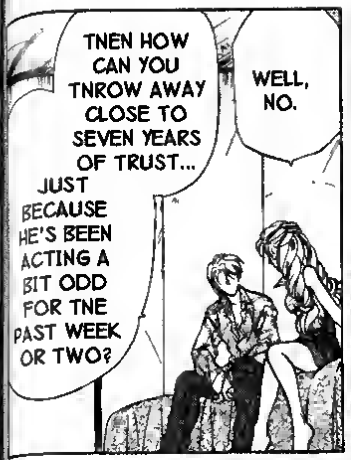

WHAT?! I GOT HERE FIRST, DAMMIT.
I'M HERE TO TALK TO RYO, NOT YOU, SO SCRAM!!
DEE, WOULD YOU MIND? JUST GO FIND SOMETHING TO DO FOR A SEC, WOULD YOU?

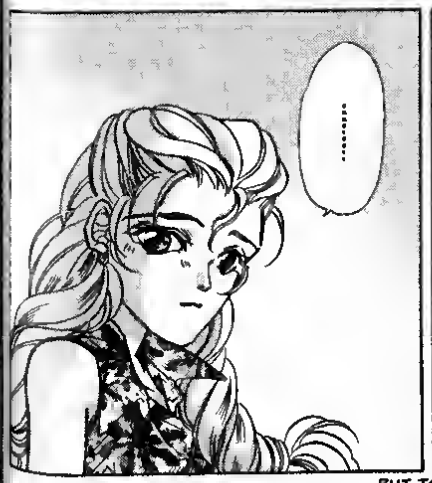

squeeze
CAROL?

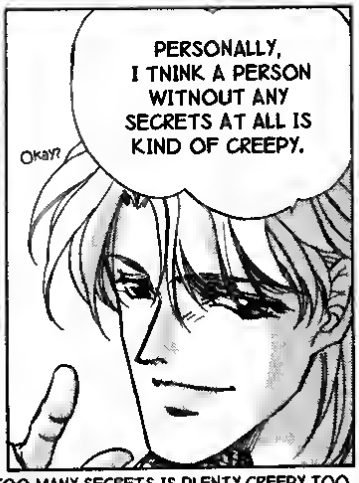
I...
I DON'T THINK BIKKY LIKES ME ANYMORE.






WELL, NO.
THEN HOW CAN YOU THROW AWAY CLOSE TO SEVEN YEARS OF TRUST... JUST BECAUSE HE'S BEEN ACTING A BIT ODD FOR THE PAST WEEK OR TWO?

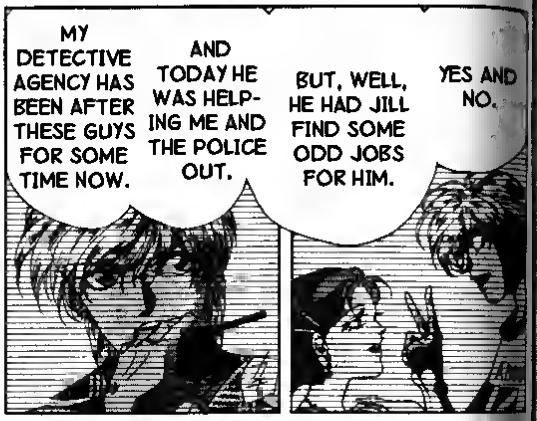




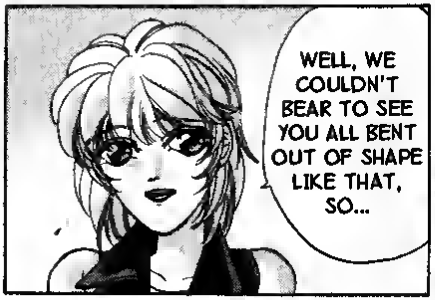
BUT TOO MANY SECRETS IS PLENTY CREEPY TOO.

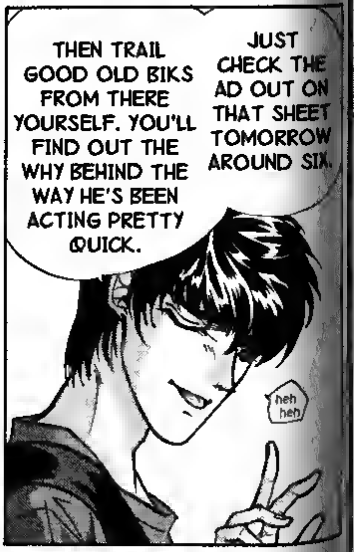
DOES HE NEED MONEY OR SOMETHING?
HERE AND THERE?
WHATEVER HIS REASONS, HE'S BEEN WORKING REALLY HARD TRYING TO MAKE SOME EXTRA MONEY HERE AND THERE.
BUT WE CAN TELL YOU:

IF I SAY ANY MORE, I THINK HE'LL HAVE MY HIDE... SO, WELL, HERE.
vhp
WHAT'S THIS?


MY DETECTIVE AGENCY HAS BEEN AFTER THESE GUYS FOR SOME TIME NOW.
AND TODAY HE WAS HELPING ME AND THE POLICE OUT.
BUT, WELL, HE HAD JILL FIND SOME ODD JOBS FOR HIM.
YES AND NO.

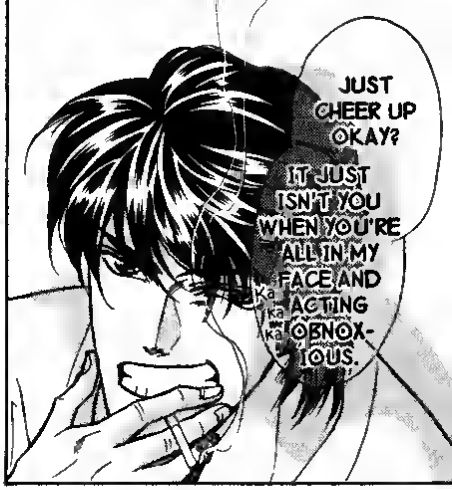
ARE YOU SURE? I THOUGHT THIS WAS A BIG SECRET.
I don't see how this is any different from just telling me but

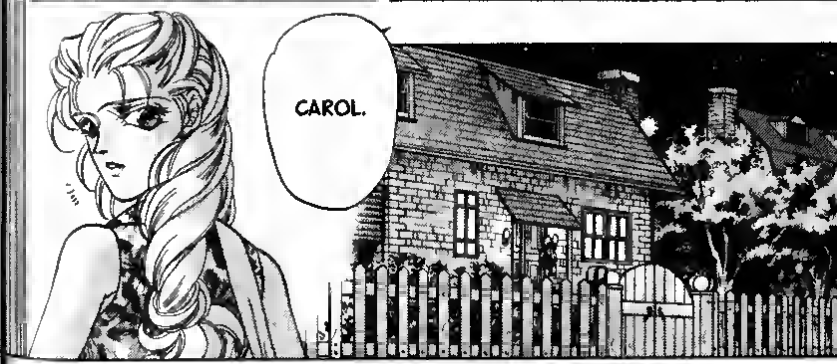

WELL, WE COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE YOU ALL BENT OUT OF SHAPE LIKE THAT, SO...


THEN TRAIL GOOD OLD BIKS FROM THERE YOURSELF. YOU'LL FIND OUT THE WHY BEHIND THE WAY HE'S BEEN ACTING PRETTY QUICK.
JUST CHECK THE AD OUT ON THAT SHEET TOMORROW AROUND SIX.
heh heh

...

I AM NOT OBNOXIOUS, GEEK!
Pbbh hee!!


JUST CHEER UP OKAY?
IT JUST ISN'T YOU WHEN YOU'RE ALL IN MY FACE AND ACTING OBNOXIOUS.
Ka ka ka


CAROL.

SORRY ABOUT THE WHOLE BIKKY DEAL, CAROL.
IT'S LIKE, WE KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON BUT WE JUST CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT IT IS EXACTLY.

LAI?
LASS?

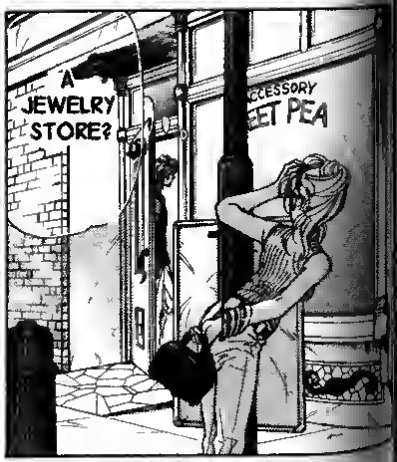
COME BACK ANY TIME.
SEE YA, MAN.
THANKS.

GIRL? WHY THAT LITTLE BASTARD. USING A GIRL AS AN EXCUSE FOR DITCHING ME TO MAKE MONEY.

I WONDER WHERE HE'S OFF TO NOW.

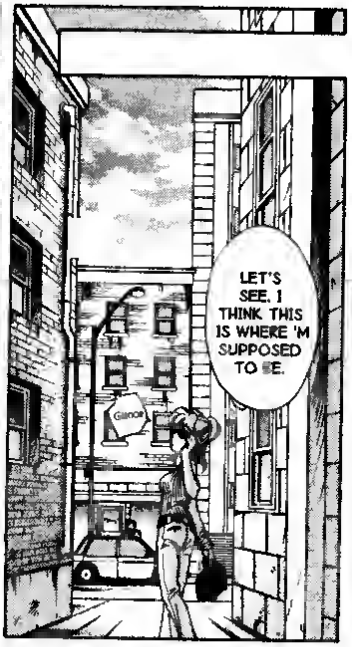
Hmm? Wait a second. This is where—
YOU LIKE IT?
YOU COULD SAY THAT.
ACCESSORY SWEET PEA

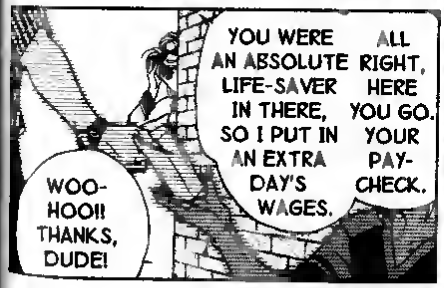
ring
ring


A JEWELRY STORE?
ACCESSORY
EET PEA

OOH, I WANT A HUG TOO.
GOOD LUCK, GIRLIE!
THANKS GUYS. I'LL CHECK IT OUT.

BIKKY.
hide


LET'S SEE. I THINK THIS IS WHERE 'M SUPPOSED TO BE.


YOU WERE AN ABSOLUTE LIFE-SAVER IN THERE, SO I PUT IN AN EXTRA DAY'S WAGES.
ALL RIGHT, HERE YOU GO. YOUR PAY-CHECK.
WOO-HOO!! THANKS, DUDE!

HEH, HEH, HEH. MAYBE.
BY THE WAY, I HEARD YOU WERE GOING TO USE THAT MONEY TO BUY SOMETHING NICE FOR YOUR GIRL. WAY TO GO, MR. ROMANCE.

trip
WAAH!

WAIT!!
GIVE IT BACK!!
run

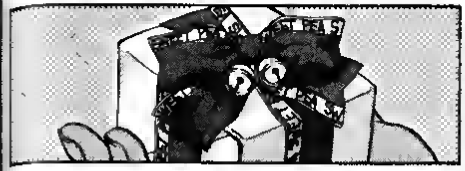
WHOA! YOU OKAY THERE, KID?
fret fret

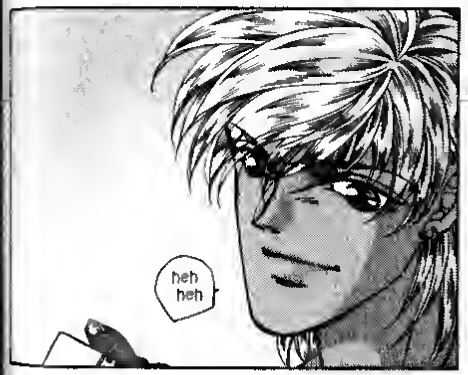
YOUR MONEY?
WAIT. THOSE GUYS THAT RAN BY JUST NOW?!
THEY TOOK ALL MY MONEY!!

COME ON KID, DON'T CRY.
WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO BUY WITH IT ANY-HOW?
sniff
sob
pat pat

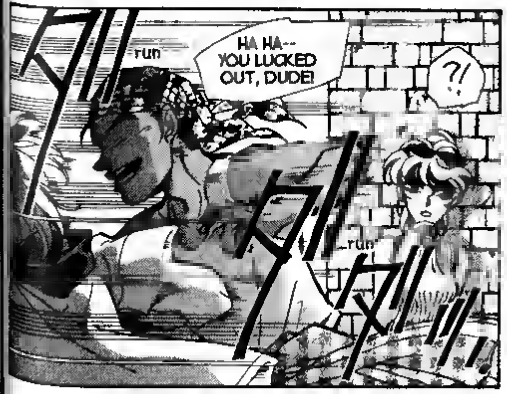
SONS OF BITCHES.
grit

BUT IF YOU FOLLOW HIM, MAYBE YOU'LL FIGURE IT OUT FOR YOURSELF.
I JUST CAN'T TELL YOU, CAROL.
Which means that when that guy referred to his "girl" he meant

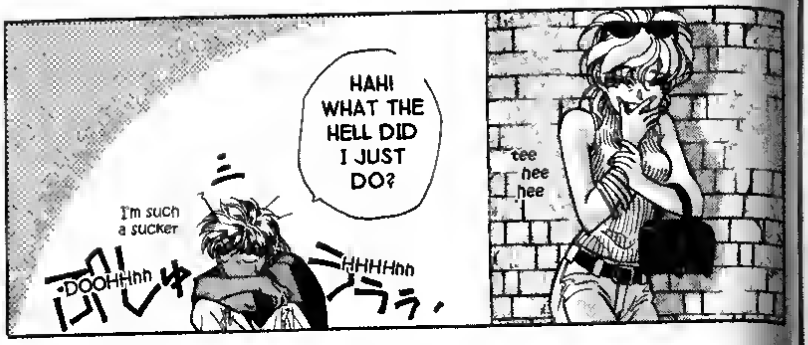



heh heh

ring ring


run
HA HA-- YOU LUCKED OUT, DUDE!
?!
run

OH MY GOSH! I WONDER IF IT'S FINALLY TIME TO JUMP TO A CONCLU-SION.

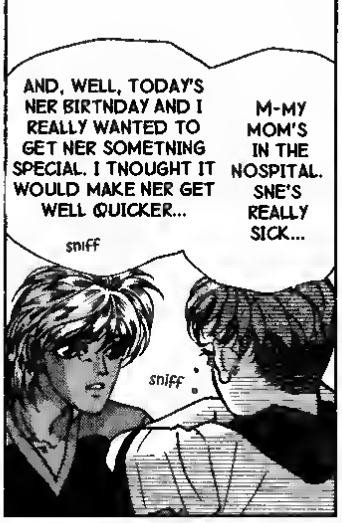

HAH! WHAT THE HELL DID I JUST DO?
I'm such a sucker
DOOHHhh
HHHHhh
tee hee hee

knock knock

BIKKY!

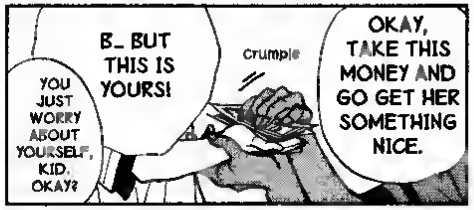
DON'T APOLOGIZE, SILLY. IT WAS MY OWN FAULT JUST STANDING OUT THERE LIKE THAT.
I MUST HAVE SCARED YOU HALF TO DEATH.
close
I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE FOR YESTERDAY, FOR YELLING AT YOU. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE THERE HELPING JILL OUT. LASS FILLED ME IN.

pat
WAIT RIGHT HERE A SECOND, KID.
?

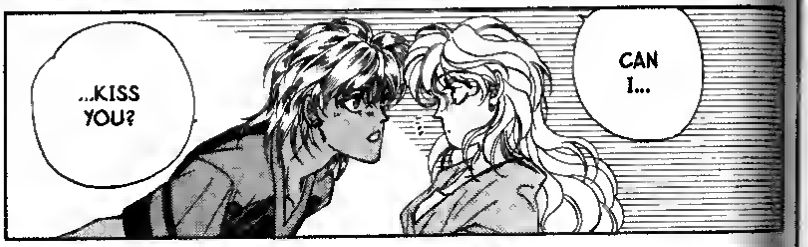

AND, WELL, TODAY'S NER BIRTHDAY AND I REALLY WANTED TO GET NER SOMETHING SPECIAL. I THOUGHT IT WOULD MAKE NER GET WELL QUICKER...
M-MY MOM'S IN THE HOSPITAL. SHE'S REALLY SICK...
sniff
sniff

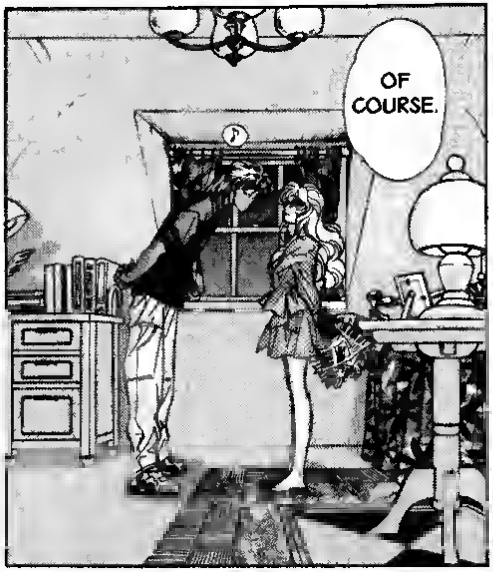
ring
ring
ACCESSORY
SWEET PEA

NO PROB. TAKE CARE, KID.
AHH. THANK YOU SOOOO MUCH!!
dash


B_ BUT THIS IS YOURS!
crumple
YOU JUST WORRY ABOUT YOURSELF, KID. OKAY?
OKAY, TAKE THIS MONEY AND GO GET HER SOMETHING NICE.

AND DON'T GET SNAGGED AGAIN, GOT IT? NOW SCAT.


...KISS YOU?
CAN I...


OF COURSE.

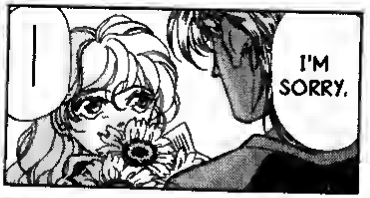
hehe

Rustle
Happy Birthday.

SO, UMMM.
UMM, SO, YEAH_ IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY TODAY, RIGHT? YOUR 18TH?

UMM, I SORTA LOST IT ON THE WAY OVER.
I ACTUALLY HAD A REAL PRESENT BUT...
They're so tiny too.
OHMIGOSH! THEY ARE SOOOOOOO CUTE!! I LOVE SUNFLOWERS!!

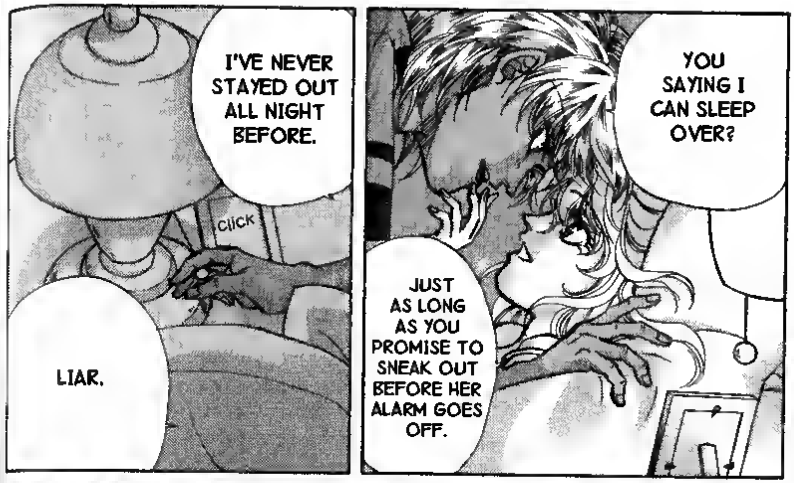
THE ONLY THING I WANT.. IS YOU.


I'M SORRY.

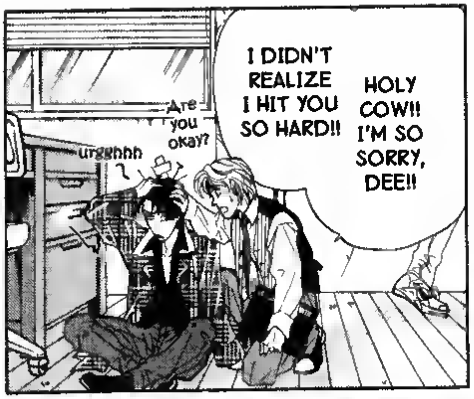
HUH?
I DON'T WANT IT ANYWAY.

Fall
WAA HHH HII
Crin-kle
DO YOU REMEMBER...
THE PROMISE WE MADE?

FAKE
act.13


I'VE NEVER STAYED OUT ALL NIGHT BEFORE.
Click
LIAR.
YOU SAYING I CAN SLEEP OVER?
JUST AS LONG AS YOU PROMISE TO SNEAK OUT BEFORE HER ALARM GOES OFF.

See you again.
THE SUSPECT DIDN'T GET HOME 'TIL THIS MORNING I HEAR.
AHHH!! MY SUNFLOWERS ARE GONE!!


I DIDN'T REALIZE I HIT YOU SO HARD!!
HOLY COW!! I'M SO SORRY, DEE!!
Are you okay?
urggghhh

DEE?!
thud

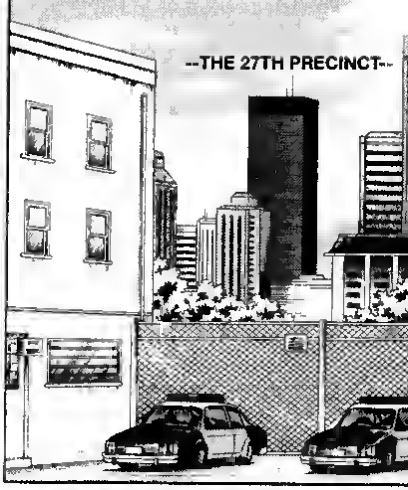
HMM?

EHH?

SICK?!
glare
DEE, YOU'RE BURNING UP. ARE YOU SICK?

HACHO OOOOO OOHHH!!

HHAA WWHH HHHH..

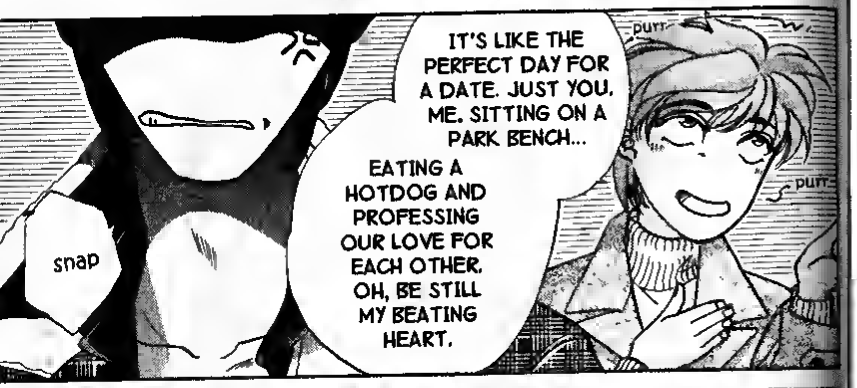

--THE 27TH PRECINCT--

sniffle
DAAAHH! WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH ME? IT'S THE START OF THE DAY AND ALREADY I'VE GOT CHILLS AND MY HEAD FEELS LIKE ASPHALT DURING A HELL'S ANGELS RALLY.
THIS IS SO NOT COOL.

MORNING, DEE
EH?
pat

MORNING.

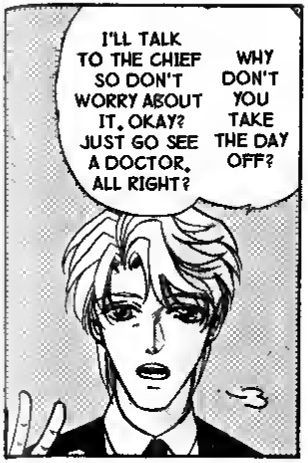
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
walk walk walk walk
IT'S BEAUTIFUL OUTSIDE, YOU KNOW.
CAN I GO WITH YOU?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, DEE?
WHERE'S RYO?
WHY ARE YOU ALL BY YOURSELF?

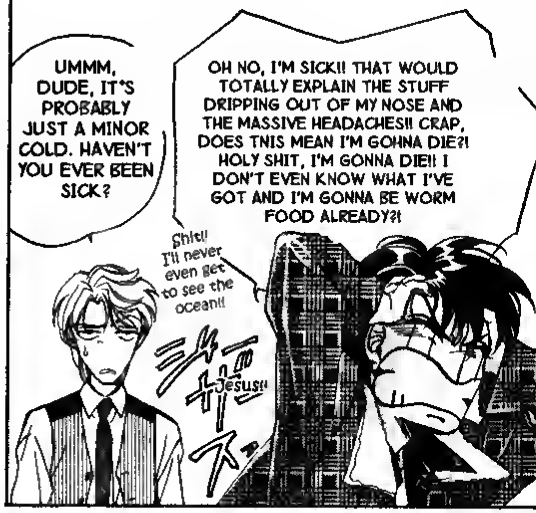

IT'S LIKE THE PERFECT DAY FOR A DATE. JUST YOU, ME, SITTING ON A PARK BENCH...
purr
EATING A HOTDOG AND PROFESSING OUR LOVE FOR EACH OTHER. OH, BE STILL MY BEATING HEART.
purr
snap

YO?
DRAKE!!
open

HOLY CRAP, JJ?!
chuck
Ever heard of restraint, Dee? Geez!! I think you might have gone too far this time!! You evil beast!!
Faint
WATCH THIS FOR ME, WOULD YOU?

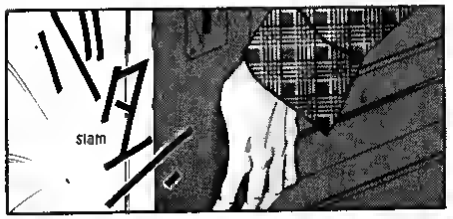
GYAAHHH!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING, DEE?
Just shut the hell up, dammit!!
I HOPE YOU FRIGGIN' CHOKE ON A HOTDOG OR TUNA SANDWICH OR WHATEVER THE HELL YOU SHOVE DOWN YOUR THROAT. I DON'T CARE!!
rage
Can't breathe

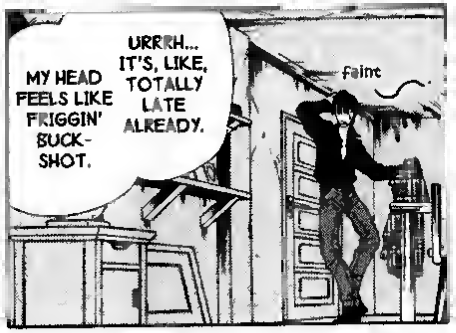

I'LL TALK TO THE CHIEF SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, OKAY? JUST GO SEE A DOCTOR, ALL RIGHT?
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE DAY OFF?


UMMM, DUDE, IT'S PROBABLY JUST A MINOR COLD. HAVEN'T YOU EVER BEEN SICK?
OH NO, I'M SICK!! THAT WOULD TOTALLY EXPLAIN THE STUFF DRIPPING OUT OF MY NOSE AND THE MASSIVE HEADACHES!! CRAP, DOES TNIS MEAN I'M GONNA DIE?! HOLY SHIT, I'M GONNA DIE!! I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I'VE GOT AND I'M GONNA BE WORM FOOD ALREADY?!
Shit!! I'll never even get to see the ocean!!
Jesus!!

ack
DEE!!!

grumble
TODAY JUST CAN'T GET ANY WORSE.
DAMMIT. I THINK I WAS SICK ONCE, AND THAT WAS LIKE 20 YEARS AGO.
grumble

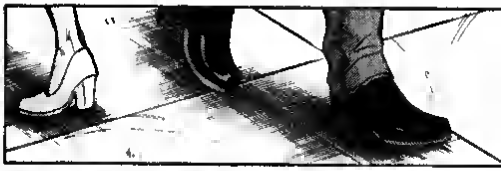

slam


URRRH... IT'S, LIKE, TOTALLY LATE ALREADY.
MY HEAD FEELS LIKE FRIGGIN' BUCK-SHOT.
faint

CAN'T... GO_ ON... SO COLD!
thud

LEAST HE COULD DO WAS FRIGGIN' DRIVE ME HOME OR SOMETHING. SHEESH. WHAT DOES A MAN HAVE TO DO TO GET A SPECK OF SYMPATHY OUT OF HIM?
AHHH, AND SPEAKIN' OF COLD... HOW ABOUT MY FRIGGIN' PARTNER?
God damn it

tug
?!



SHIT, NOW IT FEELS LIKE MY HEAD'S GONNA EXPLODE. GUESS I BETTER HEAD HOME.

GAHHH!!
fall

sniff
I CAN'T FIND MY MAMA.
EH?

GRRRR!! WHAT THE--?

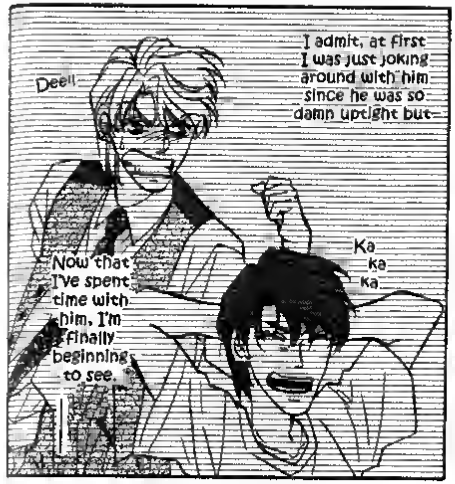
I want to be with him. I want to walk with him every step of the way.

But I want him to want me.

RYO!

God damn it.
MAN, I'M SUCH A HOPELESS ROMANTIC.
I'm getting all teary-eyed thinking about him.

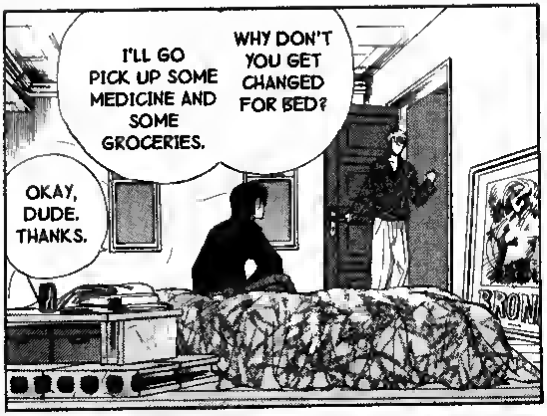
?!
WHO'S HOPELESS?

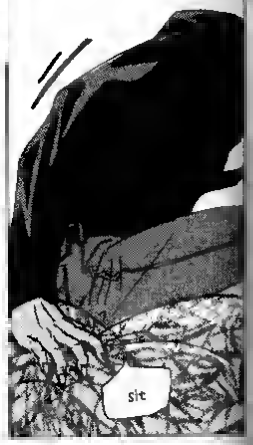

Dee!!
I admit, at first I was just joking around with him since he was so damn upright but—
Now that I've spent time with him, I'm finally beginning to see.
Ka ka ka

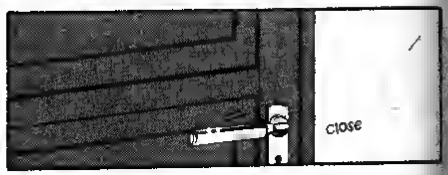
HE STILL DOESN'T EVEN KNOW I'M HEAD OVER HEELS FOR HIM.

Geez, at some point, before I even knew I was doing it—
—the truth about him. What he's really like.

—I began to pray he'd stay close to me forever


I'LL GO PICK UP SOME MEDICINE AND SOME GROCERIES.
WHY DON'T YOU GET CHANGED FOR BED?
OKAY, DUDE. THANKS.


sit


close

phew

I'M BEAT.
fall

I WAS TRYING TO GO STRAIGHT HOME, THANK YOU VERY MUCH. STUPID KIDS. THEY ALWAYS GET THE BEST OF ME.

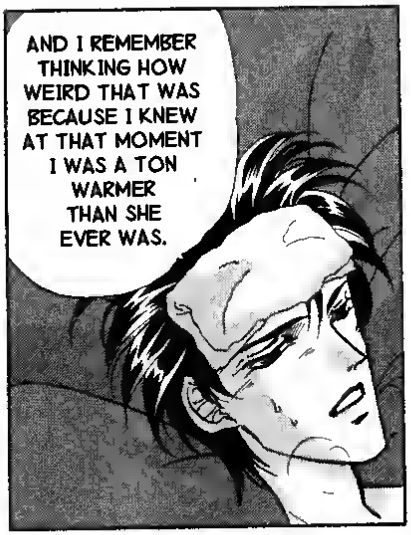
I'VE FALLEN AND I CAN'T GET UP, YOU MORON.
Like I'd be down here on purpose?
IF I RECALL, YOU'RE SICK, SO WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING SPRAWLED OUT ON THE HALLWAY FLOOR? PLUS, YOU LEFT YOUR DOOR UNLOCKED.

HERE, UP WE GO. THINK YOU CAN MANAGE THE VAST DISTANCE FROM HERE TO BED IF I SUPPORT YOU LIKE THIS?
IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT, YOU KNOW. YOU SHOULD HAVE GONE STRAIGHT HOME.

snicker

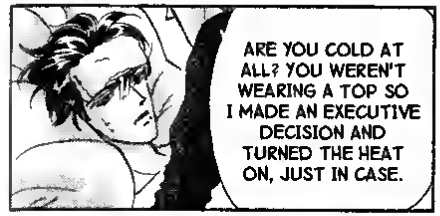
I WOULD HAVE SMACKED YOU IF YOU HAD EVEN CONSIDERED LEAVING HER ON HER OWN.
WHAT THE HELL ELSE WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO, HUH? LEAVE HER ASS THERE?

SHE SAID YOU SPENT THE WHOLE DAY WITH HER DAUGHTER LOOKING FOR HER. YOU'RE WAY BEYOND SWEET SOMETIMES.
HER MOTHER DROPPED BY THE STATION, BY THE WAY, TO SAY THANK YOU.


AND I REMEMBER THINKING HOW WEIRD THAT WAS BECAUSE I KNEW AT THAT MOMENT I WAS A TON WARMER THAN SHE EVER WAS.

THEY WERE SO FREAKIN' WARM.

YEAH. I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
WE CAN TALK LATER, OKAY?
TRY AND GET SOME SLEEP, DEE. YOU'RE TIRED.


ARE YOU COLD AT ALL? YOU WEREN'T WEARING A TOP SO I MADE AN EXECUTIVE DECISION AND TURNED THE HEAT ON, JUST IN CASE.

SORRY, DID I WAKE YOU?

HMM?
WHEN I WAS A KID...

I REMEMBER HER HANDS BEING REALLY WARM.

WELL, THERE WAS THIS ONE TIME I GOT REALLY REALLY SICK...
...I THINK MOTHER HAD TO SIT AND TAKE CARE OF ME FOR THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS STRAIGHT.

FOR TONIGHT THOUGH, I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU. OKAY?
HEY..
YOUR KISS IS PRETTY WARM. HELL, I'D EVEN SAY IT'S HOT.

HEH. NOW YOU'RE GONNA BE HACKING UP A LUNG, TOO.
WELL, YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO COME BY AND TAKE CARE OF ME THEN, WON'T YOU?
GOOD NIGHT.

COMING IN JANUARY

-FAKE-

VOLUME FIVE

Ryo is on the biggest case of his life as he and Dee trail the cold-blooded killer that murdered Ryo's parents. With a little help from Diana Spacey, FBI agent extraordinaire, they soon catch up with the perp...but will a lack of evidence turn the murderer loose or turn Ryo into a cold-blooded killer himself?